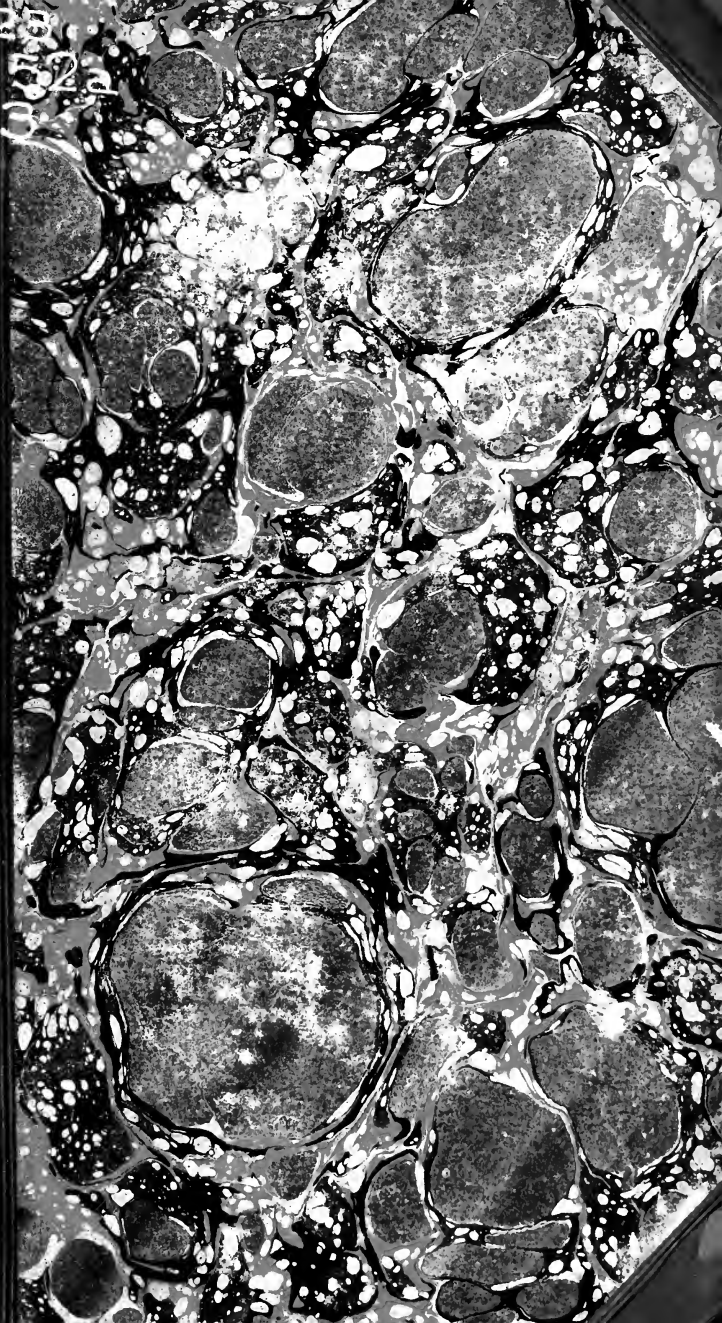


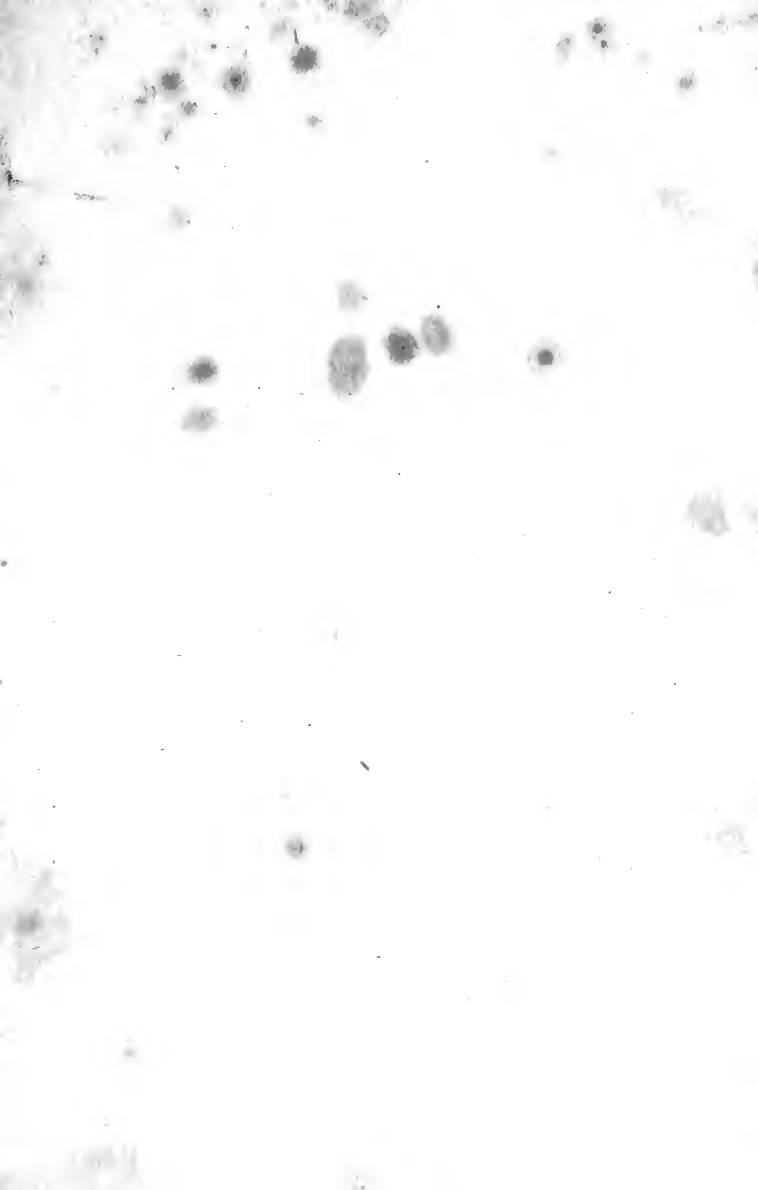
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AIMS AND ENDS:

AND

OONAGH LYNCH:

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CARWELL."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL III.

LONDON:

EDWARD BULL, HOLLES STREET.

1832.

London: Printed by S. BENTLEY, Dorset Street.

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OONAGH LYNCH.

(CONTINUED.)

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OONAGH LYNCH.

CHAPTER V.

THE solicitude to which the event of Pinelli's imposture had given rise—the gloom of Kiltarle—were alike forgotten by Miss Lynch, when Sir Maurice arrived there; the bleak spring of Kerry seemed fraught with the sunshine and orange-flower odour of southern Europe, and Oonagh's gladness at meeting him enabled her for some hours to forget that the gladness was her's alone.

Maurice had nothing to divide his attention with Oonagh; he conversed more with her, and was much more agreeable, even as an acquaintance, since he had lost the preoccupation she had observed at Paris. His religion and po-

litics were the same as those of Sir Patrick, but his character and feelings were entirely different; his ambition was to distinguish himself by serving his prince and his country, and if his chivalrous devotion to the first was predominant, that loyal romance will be pardoned by those who know how strong the feeling was in his party and the seventeenth century—at least, if they can pardon the extreme importance which Madame de Sevigné attaches not only to royal favour, but to the slightest indication of royal notice, and the smallest distinctions of court etiquette. Among many unaccountable and laughable instances of this, there is one pre-eminent. When the vain daughter of Gaston D'Orleans communicated her intended marriage with Lauzun, adding that she had postponed it to a certain day, Madame de Sevigné advised her to conclude it at once, lest any unforeseen obstacle should intervene; that to delay it “*c'est tenter Dieu et le Roi.*”

Sir Maurice eagerly shared in the political consultations of Sir Patrick, but not with the same spirit: he thought more of the King's

interests, Sir Patrick of his own. Once, when speaking of public affairs, during the frequent interviews Maurice now had with Oonagh, he seemed to allude to his individual feeling. When she smiled at the warmth with which he dwelt on the Jacobite cause, and observed to him how much he had it at heart, Maurice replied, "Yes, dear Oonagh, every day, every hour adds to the deep feeling of anxiety for a restoration: the disappointment, the ill-success of other interests — circumstances which wean the heart: in short, of late, for some time past, nothing else has seemed fit to excite the enthusiasm which in my boyhood was devoted to less worthy objects."

Oonagh was not without hope of hearing what had been the objects he now deemed unworthy; she dared not breathe lest she should interrupt him, but he made no farther allusion to himself.

There had, then, been a time when he had felt for others what he did not feel towards her! She was the unregarded companion of Maurice Bellew, though he admitted he had been capable of enthusiastic attachment, and

for those who had disappointed—perhaps been indifferent to him. How she wondered at their insensibility ! at the strange and perverse distribution of affection in this world, which made her's a silent sacrifice, and his a vain offering !

Sir Patrick was far from suspecting that Maurice was indifferent or disinclined to his daughter. Her fortune, and the other advantages of the alliance, made him suppose a connexion, so much the interest of Bellew, must be greatly his wish ; while the grace, beauty, and amiable disposition of Oonagh, seemed to make it impossible that worldly advantages alone should influence his pursuit. Oonagh's opposition to the match he still considered as the result of her aunt's superstition, and the flattery of the nuns ; and he was the less curious in scanning what were the feelings of either, as he, (like many men who become fathers in early life,) laboured under the delusion of supposing, that his children would so continue till he chose to consider himself an aged man : a period then far distant, and liable to be postponed, in his imagination, to a much more distant time than nature intended.

During his residence in Kerry, the death of his cousin Lady Honor Lynch, daughter to the last Earl of Glendalough, occurred, by which the remaining estates of the family were added to his already ample fortune; and he received the congratulation of King James, accompanied by promises the most gratifying to his ambition. He almost repented that the Earldom only had been his request, and that he had not sons to share the inheritance of his increased possessions.

“Oonagh,” said Sir Maurice gaily, “I must congratulate you upon being the greatest beauty among heiresses, and the greatest heiress among beauties. What would become of the court of France, were you not in the Kerry mountains? How many more admirers will be added to your list, and how I should like to know which will be successful! Remember, I insist upon your not choosing M. de Cercy, nor the Comte de Vilman. Indeed, I should make a more lengthened proscription, but they say, when prohibitions are too numerous, they are most generally disregarded.”

“In my case they are needless, Sir Mau-

rice," replied Oonagh : " I chose long since my destiny, and am more than ever resolved to adhere to my early determination. When my father consents to allow it, I shall return to the convent which I quitted with reluctance, and wish I had never quitted at all."

She spoke with grave determination. A very slight tinge of colour passed over her cheek, which was usually pale as the white rose of Provence. It did not arise from the consciousness that his indifference bound her to the cloister, but from impatience at the disengaged manner with which he spoke of the possibility of her belonging to another.

Maurice was far from the presumption which would have enabled him to make the true interpretation. He only saw in the resolution she announced, the empire the nuns had obtained over her mind, and the justification of Sir Patrick's occasionally half-uttered complaints, " that Theresa had filled his daughter's mind with superstitious fancies." He therefore rejoiced at having found an opportunity of combating opinions he considered as opposed to her ultimate happiness ; and laid before her,

with very earnest eloquence, all those arguments likely to convince her, how much, how deeply she would probably repent, if, from mistaken piety, she resolved to forego all the natural interests and ties of this life.

She heard him use all the persuasion her fancy had sometimes lent to a visionary hero, but without personal interest in her decision—without a warmer interest than friendship and good-will might inspire ! She blushed for the vanity that had taught her to expect more !

Sir Maurice's anxiety to induce a change in her resolution often led him to renew the conversation : pique and disappointment gave an increased appearance of decision to her intention.

In an interview she had with Sir Patrick soon after, some discussion arose relative to a marriage with Sir Maurice, when Oonagh expressing a wish not to hear the alliance again proposed, Sir Patrick said, with some displeasure, that he did not believe Maurice would find much difficulty in winning any other lady : “ Most young women would know the value of his affection.”

“ Affection ! my father,” replied Miss Lynch ;

“surely you will allow one objection—one invincible objection is, that Sir Maurice does not love—does not think of me as——”

“Oh! then, in short, all that is wanted is a little wooing!—a few pages from *Mademoiselle de Scudery*—‘a letter from Hephestion to Parisatis?’ “*Celui du quel vous vous êtes cachée avec tant de soin, ne peut se cacher de vous, oh Parisatis!*”—Is that all, Oonagh? Well, that is easily obtained. The moment I give Maurice leave to address you, can you for an instant believe that he will not gladly avail himself of it? Do you think the heiress of Glendalough and Kiltarle likely to be overlooked? And you will not, I am sure, Oonagh, affect to deny that you are considered beautiful—one of the most beautiful women that ever appeared at the court of France? Maurice Bellew is not a man to disregard either of these claims.”

“An heiress I am, dear father—a beauty I may be,” said Oonagh, gravely and sadly; “but still I may not be beloved. But,” added she more hastily, to prevent her father dwelling on an idea that might fret or irritate him, “it signifies little; my resolution is taken:—

at all events, I desire nothing on earth but to finish my life where I first learned how I ought to spend it. Dear, dear father, let me return to my convent."

"I will not have this childish whim ever named again in my presence," said Sir Patrick, angrily: "understand this at once, Oonagh; and if you *dislike* Maurice Bellew (which is what I cannot believe of any woman, not blind or stupid), you may marry Lord Rostellan. He would have naturally been the husband I should have preferred for you, had not the age of his nephew been more suitable to your own."

"Lord Rostellan!" exclaimed Oonagh. She stood aghast at the idea.

Lord Rostellan was two years younger than her father, but appeared more aged, from frequent attacks of gout, and the traces of premature age earned by dissipated youth. He had been married, but was childless, and at the death of his wife had speculated upon choosing another; but being very fond of Maurice (who was his presumptive heir), and very averse to marriage, which, in his experience,

had been a long scene of discord and disturbance, he had relinquished the idea. While he yet entertained it, Oonagh, in spite of her youth, had been one of the persons he thought an eligible match, for the same reasons which had recommended Maurice to Sir Patrick ; and when he gave up all thoughts of Miss Lynch for himself, he wished her the wife of his successor.

Sir Patrick had lived so much in France, that it is not remarkable he should have adopted the ways of thinking which prevailed there at the beginning of the eighteenth century. He, therefore, considered women as having no moral existence till after marriage ; and the establishment of a young woman, as entirely the affair of her father or guardian as the management of her estate. The feeble and timid nature of Anastasia—her taste for frivolous amusement and entire submission to his will, had contributed very much to confirm these ideas ; and though fond and proud of his daughter, her expressing a different will and opinion from that which he dictated, seemed the extravagant folly of a child, whom it was

necessary to overrule, but scarcely worth while to convince. Still, his fondness for Oonagh prompted him to explain to her, at some length, all the advantages likely to result from her marriage with Lord Rostellan or Maurice Bellew; and he concluded by saying, that had he been the father of several girls, some of them, *of course*, would have been dedicated to a religious life, to ensure the suitable establishment of the rest; having but one however, it was equally of course that she should marry.

Timidity prevented Oonagh from pleading, on the contrary side, with all the force another might have done; some spell restrained her tongue when she wished to remind Sir Patrick that Maurice seemed indifferent to her, and that she thought he loved another:—was it mortification?—was it pride?

Perhaps, had her father encouraged her confidence, or even insisted on her disclosing if she had any beyond that which was the ostensible motive, he would have penetrated her secret, or it might have burst from her heart; but he showed so evidently that he thought her childish and silly, that she felt depressed

and reserved, and rejoiced to have their conference interrupted by a foreign despatch, which brought Sir Patrick the most kind and flattering assurances of his master's favour, and reliance on his zeal.

“Then it is certain I shall be married!” said Oonagh, “and even less happily than if the wife of Sir Maurice; for, if not beloved, I should then have a right to place my whole happiness in promoting his. I should see him constantly; and surely, as a friend, I should be valued. I should too constantly study his will, too accurately divine his wishes, to be a burthensome companion! But, to wed another man!—Lord Rostellan!—or any man, would be the depth of misery! To hear of Maurice's misfortune, and hardly dare to weep—of his happiness, when my rejoicing must not exceed the cold limits of good-will and benevolence—his name, when I must not claim it—his voice, which is now to me as the sound of angels' hymns to the hermit in a desert, it would then be crime to listen and to prize the sound!”

These musings filled Oonagh's mind as she

wandered on the sea-shore, and pursued a narrow and rugged path sometimes frequented by the fishermen. It was often uncertain, and at length all traces of it seemed obliterated. Miss Lynch's attention was recalled to her situation ; she was at a considerable distance from the castle—how far, and in what direction, she knew not—and might not be able to find her way ere night-fall. She sought on all sides some marks to direct her course, but there was a rugged uniformity even in its wildness, that defied her observation.

After various wanderings in fancied paths, she climbed a pointed crag, which afforded a more extensive view; and though she could not perceive any indication of the way to Kiltarle, she observed that on one side the herbage was less scanty, and some languishing and dwarfed bushes of furze seemed to denote the way inland, and consequently offered the greatest chance of finding a guide. Oonagh proceeded on that side. The signs of vegetation increased, and her anxiety diminished as she saw a trace of bare pebbles among it, and a division between the tall mallow and sorrel which skirted

either side,—it was certainly a path. This led her through a narrow ravine into a sheltered plain moor, green, and better furnished with wood than the immediate environs of the castle ; but the spot was new to her eye. While she surveyed it, she observed a man bearing a small basket, and on approaching him to enquire her way to Kiltarle, she perceived it was Herman Schenk ; to whom she communicated her previous embarrassment, and prepared to return with him to the castle.

After the first few minutes of the walk, Miss Lynch sank into thoughtful silence, and her companion soon ceased to make any effort to converse with her, till she started on hearing a distant gun, and exclaimed, “ That must be Sir Maurice Bellew’s gun !”

“ Your ear is quick, Madam, in catching distant sound,” replied Schenk.

Oonagh blushed, and was silent, but the German in a few moments again addressed her.

“ If a friend had the power to render you a considerable service, should you distrust his motive, and decline the advantage, if offered on condition of his receiving a benefit from you ?”

“Certainly not,” said Oonagh ; “ why should my having the power to serve a friend, diminish my respect and regard for his character, or my confidence in his good-will ?”

“Your sentiment is just,” replied Schenk ; “I might have foreseen your reply, from my knowledge of your disposition. Yet, before I speak with perfect frankness, I must obtain your leave to do so without the fear of offending ; and I must farther require your promise to be silent respecting the service I offer, whether you determine to accept or refuse it.”

“I know, Mr. Schenk, I can never have any just reason to be offended at any communication you may make, and I hope you do not think me,” added she, smiling, “so ill-tempered as to be offended without reason : I freely promise you, whether I accept or refuse the service you offer, to be perfectly silent to every one on the subject.”

“From the occupations that Sir Patrick engaged me to undertake in this country, Madam, you may easily suppose that chemistry, geology, and some other sciences connected with these, have been the principal pursuits of my

life ; and to you I need not hesitate to disclose that the more recondite branches of mineralogy and botany, (which the Chaldeans termed natural magic,) afforded me particular delight. Study soon proved how much the very name of this science has been misunderstood and maligned, and by removing a prejudice, enabled me to add Theurgia, or celestial magic, to these acquirements. The pleasure inspired by increased knowledge, improved faculties, and the power of conferring important benefits on my fellow-creatures, was diminished, by finding the strong prejudice which rendered some ungrateful, and all distrustful ; nay, some of those to whom I offered the fruits of severe study, weary vigils, and frequent privations, became my most treacherous persecutors ; more than once my life was only saved by immediate flight. So far from reaping the fruits of my discoveries, my life has been a series of profitless wanderings, solitary musings, and constant penury.

“ More prudent than most of my predecessors, I renounced the profession of such knowledge as raised the envy and envenomed the malice of my inferiors in science ; I accommo-

dated myself to the views of those among whom it was my lot to be cast.

“ When Sir Patrick engaged me to make a mineralogical survey of his possessions in this country, I came to reside at Kiltarle, without knowing the situation of his family. A very short observation showed me what his views for the establishment of his daughter were ; and (excuse me, Miss Lynch, if) I saw those views were not adverse to your feelings, nor did it escape my notice that Sir Maurice was less impressed by the honour designed him than might have been expected. The consequence will be Sir Patrick’s disappointment, your wearing out your days in a cloister, and the endless repining of him, whose blind indifference at this moment, would be evermore remembered with the deepest self-accusation.

“ These evils it is in my power to prevent, yet I greatly doubt the prudence of attempting it. You would not be tempted, however, to rely on one rash enough to overlook personal danger : I ought not to be the victim of my efforts to effect the happiness of your family, and shall in return exact enough to procure competence in

my own, or some other country ;—but of this we must speak hereafter. What more immediately concerns you is this. I will engage to place in your hands a drug—a spell—call it which you please, sufficiently powerful to obtain for you the heart of Sir Maurice Bellew ; you will secure the affection of the man you prefer, obey your father, and fulfil your duties.”

“ No,” said Oonagh ; “ had Sir Maurice loved me of his own free choice ;—but as he does not, why should I compel him ? ”

“ Why should you not ? ” exclaimed Schenk ; “ whom do you injure ? She whom you suppose to be beloved, is the wife of another ; she neither can, nor ought to be any thing to him.”

Oonagh started from surprise. Schenk, then, knew all that had passed in their society, even her secret suspicions of an attachment between Bellew and Madame d’Aurillac ; yet he hardly seemed to have been present at the very slight circumstances on which her suspicions were founded ! Miss Lynch had not yet learned the advantages proverbially ascribed to the position of a dispassionate spectator.

“ If,” said Oonagh, “ magic is really a

science?—but my father always talks of it as the error of our ancestors, when the world was more ignorant, and mankind less capable of discerning truth—”

“ It were disrespectful to accuse Sir Patrick of a vulgar error in making the assertion,” said Schenk ; “ but are mankind more capable of discerning truth at present than in past ages ? The physical powers of men have ever been the same ; what reason have you to suppose their moral powers are greater now than in past ages ? A certain point in science and attainments a civilized nation is allowed to reach ; and from the time they have reached it we may date their gradual declension. Did not the Egyptians possess, nearly three thousand years since, the arts, the science, of which all traces are now lost to them ? Have not the same gains and losses been the portions of other nations since ? Mankind, we may from thence learn, are susceptible of but a limited degree of improvement, because their powers of acquirement are limited ; and the deliberate opinion of the philosophers of past times may safely be adopted by the present generation, with as much confidence

as those of their most able contemporaries can inspire. That magic is a real science, was admitted by the greatest sages formerly, and can it be denied by their posterity? If it is a chimera, you risk nothing by employing the means it offers; my spell cannot harm, and you may at least prove whether it can help: in the one case you remain as it found you, in the other you obtain the object you have most at heart."

"And if I succeed," said Oonagh, "how should I have it in my power to recompense you?"

"You shall give me an instrument to entitle me to the estate of Ard carrick, when you have the misfortune to lose Sir Patrick's paternal care. It is possible that so large a portion of your land might seem, to persons less generous and just (I may add) than yourself, too high a reward for any service; but of this, Madam, you shall yourself judge. The danger I incur both to liberty and life by practising an art against which there is a general prejudice—the expenses attendant on procuring the ingredi-

ents of this subtle essence, and the difficulty of the preparation, demand a recompense, in *my* opinion ; the value of my service, of course, *you* must appreciate."

Oonagh did appreciate its value, and had Schenk demanded her whole rich inheritance and half her life, his spell would have seemed a cheap purchase of the means of securing the heart of Maurice Bellew. After a pause, and with a hesitation arising from a wish to hide the willingness with which she accorded the proposed remuneration, Oonagh authorised the German to prepare the charm ; while he who had watched and justly interpreted her feelings, almost repented he had not set a yet higher price on his aid, as he saw how readily any reward would have been granted. He promised the philtre in three weeks, assuming that certain herbs necessary to its composition must be gathered when the planets by which they are governed are in particular aspects.

While he was engaged in conducting her homeward, nothing more passed on the subject ; but Oonagh during those three weeks alter-

nately trusted in and despaired of the success of the German's spell, as

“ The changing spirits rise and fall,”

filled her mind with groundless hope, and sank it with equally groundless fear. But her days, though unquiet from internal agitation, were happy, embellished by hope, and spent with him she loved. They conversed much and freely, and discussed all topics with fraternal intimacy.

From Sir Patrick having disclosed his intention of uniting her to Maurice before their acquaintance commenced, she had from its beginning narrowly and anxiously observed his every word and look, marked every sentiment he expressed, and all those which others expressed relating to him. Pique at his indifference, curiosity as to its cause, had rather added to than diminished the intensity of her interest ; consequently she was much better acquainted with his character than he was with her's.

Though Lord Rostellan had more than once spoken to Maurice of Oonagh Lynch as his future wife ; though much in Sir Patrick's

manner might have led him to know that he would be accepted if her suitor, he had heard them, and seen her, with so little wish to avail himself of the possibility, that he had failed to examine what her disposition to him might be.

Her extreme youth, reserve, and timidity ; the desire at his age to spend some more years of disengaged independence, before he charged himself with the destiny of another, might sufficiently account to some for his coldness ; while others might be tempted to ascribe it to his having already found an object that absorbed his attention and shut his heart to Oonagh Lynch. Whatever might be the cause, while they were in France, he was only a friendly-disposed acquaintance, who did not seek to develope her sentiments or engage her attention. During his long visit at Kiltarle, the absence of other objects, and constant approximation to her, naturally led him to converse with and observe her more ; and Oonagh's manner to him was much changed also.

While she had imagined he might become her husband, anxiety and timidity embarrassed her manner, and consciousness fettered her

power of pleasing ; but when she became convinced of his indifference, and saw nothing before her but the convent, her self-possession was restored. She spoke more, and oftener addressed her conversation to him ; insensibly she grew to treat him as a brother ; she was no longer afraid of seeming *too* glad of his approach, to press his stay, to ask him to walk or ride with her ; she expressed her opinion without hesitating lest he should disapprove it ; her fear had diminished with her hope.

This change gave Sir Maurice an opportunity of judging of her understanding, and becoming acquainted with her disposition ; and if any are disposed to smile at the favourable impression he received of the first, they must recollect the credulity of Oonagh was at the end of the seventeenth century common to many of good understanding among the worthier gender. As their intimacy increased, Sir Maurice appeared every day to take more pleasure in her society.

“ Since I have been at Kiltarle,” said he once, “ I have learned to comprehend the happiness of having sisters. I, who am an only

child, never thought much on the subject, Oonagh, till I became well acquainted with you ; and now, I am always wishing I had sisters who resembled you."

These were the first words of kindness, or rather of preference, she heard from Bellew, and they filled her with exultation and gratitude. All the flattery and homage paid her by the young Frenchmen seemed cold and mocking words, compared with these few ; she had never heard any that pleased her so much. They seemed to be repeated to her by a thousand soft voices, by day and by night ; the day seemed brighter when they recurred ; the gloomy pile of Kiltarle, and the bleak shore of Kerry, assumed a new aspect, when she repeated to herself, that though she was not loved, Maurice wished for her constant society.

Few circumstances increase the power of pleasing so much, in either man or woman, as believing they already please ; and this is more positively advantageous to the proud, who do not choose to commit themselves by making an effort they imagine may prove fruitless ; and to the timid, who fear to offend, and expect to

fail in the attempt. Both these faults were in the character of Oonagh; and when the constraint they inspired were removed, she became all she could have wished to be to her companion.

The three weeks which Schenk demanded had expired; and so pleasantly had they glided on, so satisfied was Miss Lynch with the present, that she had thought but little on the future, when she was summoned to confer with her preceptor.

“At length, Madam,” said he, “I may hope to fulfil what I promised. Here is the instrument binding you to reward me, if successful; read it. Should my share of the contract fail, I promise to restore this paper into your hands, claiming for my labour nothing but your confidence in my unavailing zeal; should I be fortunate enough to promote your happiness, I depend on your gratitude and your justice.”

Oonagh read the paper, making over her future right in the lands of Ardcarrick. She signed and restored it to Schenk, and received from him in return a small phial of thick glass,

containing a portion of a certain powder, which he directed her to infuse in any liquid Sir Maurice should drink ; adding, that it would immediately dissolve, and was entirely free from any taste or odour that could create suspicion.

Oonagh received it with a trembling hand. Before it was her's, she had anxiously wished for, and fearlessly contemplated its use ; now, she felt irresolute—alarmed at her undertaking—fearful of the result. “ Could it prove hurtful ? ”

Schenk reiterated his assurance of its harmlessness. “ The progress of its effects is even imperceptible, and not instant : I will pledge my life that no injury can occur to health, life, or reason,” he earnestly affirmed ; and at last Oonagh's hand slowly closed on the phial.

On the following day, when Sir Maurice returned from shooting, fatigued and heated, he asked for wine, and on the servant bringing some, and placing the bottle and a silver cup by him, Oonagh thought of the phial, and on his stooping to caress his dog, she cast the powder into the cup. A moment more, and Mau-

rice drank the potion ! Her perturbed manner might have excited observation, had she not left the room.

Time proceeded, without any visible change in their habit of living. Schenk had warned Oonagh not to expect immediate effects from his spell, which delay, and the happiness of the present life to her, calmed her anxiety.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN Sir Maurice Bellew had been traversing the Continent, on that tour which was formerly considered necessary to complete the education of an English gentleman, he had, of course, made some stay at Rome, where he received all the attention that a Catholic of rank, wealth, and Jacobite politics might expect at that period to meet with in the Papal dominions.

The travelling tutor to whose care Lord Rostellan had entrusted him, was, soon after their arrival at Rome, attacked by violent illness, which in a few days terminated in death, and that event made Sir Maurice unexpectedly his own master. He had always conducted himself so well that Lord Rostellan felt no

alarm at his being without a governor; and not finding immediately a person qualified to succeed the last, suffered his ward to complete the time allotted for his sojourn at Rome alone.

Bellew continued to visit all the objects worthy of notice, and to frequent the best company of that capital. Among the foreigners then residing in it was a Sicilian, by name Count Lanti. He had not been long there, nor were his acquaintance very numerous; but those who had accidentally met him, described him as singularly agreeable, and deeply skilled in music and painting, and possessed of two or three pictures which were *chef-d'œuvres* of the art.

One day that Bellew had accompanied a friend to see a celebrated picture of the Madonna in the ——— Palace, while he was expressing his admiration of the piece, other gentlemen, with whom they were unacquainted, being in the room at the same time, his friend, addressing one of the strangers, said:—"Beautiful as this is, I hear, Count Lanti, you have a Madonna which is still more so."

Count Lanti bowed, saying, "There might

be two opinions, but that he should feel particular pleasure in giving them an opportunity of forming either, if they would favour him with a visit."

A slight movement of curiosity made them accept the proposal. Sir Maurice had been introduced by his friend, and not many days after, they waited upon Count Lanti. He received them with much civility, and led the way to a saloon which contained a few excellent paintings, and the Madonna which had been so much praised. It was worthy of its reputation. The discourse turned on music, and Count Lanti's conversation was so interesting, that their visit was prolonged to an unusual hour. In the course of it, he drew near the instrument, and struck some chords in order to illustrate some opinion, but soon stopped, and said, with a smile :—" In spite of my knowledge of music, I play so indifferently, that I must appoint a representative ;" and, calling once or twice " Hortensia !" out of the open door which was at the end of the saloon, a young girl entered, who slightly bowed to the company, her eyes fixed on the Count's face.

She then placed herself at the instrument, and played, with extraordinary taste and science, the piece of which he had struck a few bars.

During her performance, which surprised all present by its perfection, Maurice contemplated with admiration the perfect symmetry of her figure, and the inimitable beauty of her face, particularly her eyes, which appeared to him unequalled in colour, beauty, and intelligence. There was a kind of contradiction between her manner, which was reserved and grave, and the expression of her countenance, which was replete with gaiety and animation. When her performance was finished, she looked towards the Count, who smiled and thanked her; and then rising, she quitted the room with a slight bow.

Lanti continued to descant on the music, but made not any observation on the musician; and, from his discourse lasting some minutes, and requiring reply, none of the company had any opportunity of doing so, if so inclined; and soon after, the visitors dispersed.

When they were going home, Sir Maurice observed to his friend, that the young girl who

had played to them that day, might be considered as a model of perfect beauty, and then made a thousand conjectures as to who and what she was likely to be, and how connected with Count Lanti. The same enthusiasm was not felt by his companion, who coldly admitted she was pretty, but denied the pre-eminence Maurice ascribed to her, and ridiculed the fervour of his praise. "But," added he, "I remember a Polish friend of mine, Ravinski, talked of having seen a daughter of Lanti's, who, he said, was the eighth wonder of the world:—I dare say this is she! Ravinski, however, was a little ashamed of his frenzy, and afterwards said, it was only at first sight, or at a distance, that she was so marvellous. I thought he seemed rather ashamed of his taste, and did not wish to be reminded of it."

Maurice wished to find an opportunity of judging whether he was right in considering the young musician as perfect in beauty as the first time he beheld her, and with that purpose soon repeated his visit; but Lanti was from home.

Another day he was more fortunate: they conversed on various topics; at length Bellew

seeing a guitar, tied with gold and rose-coloured riband, lying on a table, exclaimed, "I cannot see this instrument without recollecting how much I was indebted to you the other day for allowing me to hear the most delightful music !"

Count Lanti appeared to have forgotten the circumstance ; but after a pause said, " Oh, yes,—I think you were here one day when my daughter gave us some music. For many reasons, besides her extreme youth, I do not generally permit her to appear, or introduce my friends to her as yet, but I shall make an exception in your favour ;—come to me of an evening when you like ; I generally have a few of my friends to sit an hour with me."

Sir Maurice arrived early at the house of Count Lanti, and found more than " a few friends" collected round one or two tables, where he soon observed they were engaged in playing games of chance for rather high stakes. Some persons were conversing, but Mademoiselle Lanti was not present ; however, the half-open door at the end of the saloon indicated

that she might perhaps issue from thence, as she had formerly done.

In the mean time Count Lanti approached and pressed him to play ; to which he acceded, and alternately lost and won some moderate sums. As play was an amusement to which Bellew was not addicted, he was, as he looked, weary and abstracted. Count Lanti approached, and telling him he “ looked weary, and it was time he should hear a little music,” led the way into the inner-room, which in more than one respect resembled the garden of the Hesperides ; as, besides the attractive object that drew him thither, it contained a very adequate representation of the dragon, in an elderly Frenchwoman who sat at work on one side of the instrument. To her a fat ecclesiastic was telling a story of great length apparently, which was occasionally interrupted by his taking himself, and sometimes offering to her, a pinch of Spanish snuff.

Another personage of the same profession, so tall, lean, and gaunt, as to form a contrast with the other, had seated himself in an attitude of

attention to the conversation, but had not been sufficiently fortunate in deriving entertainment from it to avoid sinking into a slumber, so peaceful and profound that he retained his attitude of interest. His head bent forward, his open snuff-box in his hand, showed that he had tried to struggle with his conqueror. He could sleep, in spite of the glorious sight he might have gazed on, if waking, in the matchless and incomparable beauty who sat opposite to him, sometimes writing music, sometimes trying what she had written on the instrument, sometimes caressing her dog, but always looking as if sleep and silence were unknown to her bright and wandering eyes.

Count Lanti introduced Sir Maurice, and requested his daughter to remember that in him she had found an acquaintance worthy of hearing, and capable of enjoying, good music.

The Count returned to the card-tables ; and Mademoiselle Lanti said, " If your delight in good music has still left you some taste for what is only sweet and simple in melody, I am tempted to sing some of our Sicilian airs to you which please me."

On Bellew's replying as may be surmised, Mademoiselle Lanti sang, with the sweetest voice and most touching expression, several beautiful airs, and conversed with so much grace, vivacity, and intelligence, that Bellew, on quitting her father's hotel that night, felt convinced the earth had never produced her equal.

It may be supposed that his visits were frequent—they soon became diurnal, and were lengthened to the utmost period civility would allow. He was always well received by the Count, and met a distinguished welcome from Hortensia; he neither reflected on the past, or considered the future, but—the present was delightful. He was rarely interrupted by the other visitors to the Hotel Lanti; few of them ever entered the little apartment where Hortensia sat, though the approach did not seem forbidden; the card-tables in the saloon offered greater attraction than her eyes or her voice: occasionally, however, the admiring gaze and rapt attention of some young cavalier gave Maurice Bellew a degree of offence, for which he had not yet asked himself the reason.

An older man, or one less exclusively de-

voted, or more acquainted with the world, would, perhaps, have seen some matter of speculation in the circumstances which surrounded Mademoiselle Lanti. It might have been deemed imprudent by some, that a careful father should thus domesticate a young and disengaged foreigner with a daughter so young and beautiful.

It was strange, that of an age when most young females have scarcely quitted the convent, Hortensia should have no female society but her governante; and that venerable person's observation was less acute, it appeared, than her nose or chin: she was more intent on the embroidery-frame usually, than in watching the deportment of her charge; more complaisant in listening to the interminable tales of the fat Abbé, than quick to check those who might seek to win Hortensia's heart. But these errors were such as Maurice, even if he had observed them, would have seen with favour; he was the gainer by them all, and it is only when the faults of our neighbours cross our inclinations, that we deal out our disapprobation with unsparing rigour.

The first time, therefore, that Bellew thought Lanti did not sufficiently guard all approaches to his daughter, was one evening when a handsome and distinguished-looking man entered the little apartment where Bellew had for two months spent such happy days. Hortensia was singing, and did not observe the circumstance ; the governante made a profound inclination to the stranger, who returned a slight and rather haughty bow, and seated himself rather behind the group round Hortensia.

Bellew, though he saw the entrance, soon forgot the existence of the stranger, and at the close of her song was deeply engaged in eager conversation with Mademoiselle Lanti, when the visitor came forward to accost her. She received him with hasty politeness, adding,

“ I did not in the least expect the pleasure of seeing you — I was quite startled.”

“ I was afraid so,” said the stranger drily. She blushed, but did not reply.

There was something in the address of this gentleman that struck Bellew as highly disagreeable : it was difficult to define what was the peculiarity, but it might be called confidence

and pride, with a sarcastic and almost contemptuous manner towards those with whom he conversed, the lovely and youthful Hortensia not excepted : yet there was not any thing sufficiently decided to be called reprehensible ; it was rather to be felt than described, and Bellew almost wished it more evident, that he might be authorized to resent it. He retired at night with a feeling of irritation, not the less difficult to subdue because to show it would have been ridiculous. The next day, when he reached the Hotel Lanti, his trial was renewed ; he found the stranger seated in the apartment of Hortensia—even there where for two months he had been almost the only visitant ! Scarcely had he entered, when this intrusive third said, “ Pray introduce me to Sir Maurice Bellew.” Hortensia hesitated, looked at each, and said, “ Sir Maurice, Count Ravinski is very anxious to make your acquaintance.” Maurice bowed and acquiesced in the introduction with gravity and constraint ; but Ravinski smiled, and spoke more graciously than he had done hitherto : his conversation was agreeable, and that ironical

expression less observable than the preceding night. Bellew was not without hope it had only existed in his fancy ; he did not wish to think Hortensia less divine in other eyes than his own. Whether she penetrated his thought and dreaded the effect Ravinski's manner to her might have upon his mind, he could not know, but her gaiety was diminished, and her mode of addressing himself more constrained, since Ravinski's arrival.

Why should he suffer this state of things to continue. Though a foreigner, he was rich and independent, and had no friends to control him. Except Lord Rostellan and Sir Patrick Lynch, whose friendship, family connexion, and more advanced age, had invested them with a kind of right to inquire into his views, and remonstrate if they were not sane and advantageous,—no one on earth could object to any choice he might make. Hortensia was noble by birth, and of his own religion ; and his fortune was so ample as to justify his neglect of any consideration respecting her's. He could not doubt, from the reception he always met with from Count Lanti,

that no objection would arise from him. Maurice resolved to ask her hand at once. He repaired with the intention to her house.

It was not now so easy to find a moment to converse apart with her. Come when he would, Ravinski was there before him, and always so near Hortensia, that it was impossible to escape his observation. Two days were thus wasted ; and much as Maurice would have preferred the pleasure of conversing unreservedly, he saw that he must trust the expression of his attachment to writing. He thought with much exultation, that, if his suit was favourably received, he should directly obtain a right to banish, not only this troublesome intruder, but all who endeavoured to share the time and attention of Hortensia ; and he could not be accused of presumptuous anticipation in hoping his professions would be well received, if judged by those who had an opportunity of observing the cordial distinction with which she treated him.

He left Count Lanti's full of these contemplations, and was roused from them by hearing his name called by one who followed him. He

turned, and to his great surprise found it was Ravinski, who, taking his arm, proposed to accompany him home. Though Sir Maurice was not cured of the early impression he had imbibed against Ravinski, he could not, without impoliteness, decline this offer, however disagreeable the interruption might be; and he forced himself to accept it, involuntarily quickening his steps, in order to be the sooner rid of his companion.

Ravinski laughed: "You seem in haste, Sir Maurice, but I will honestly tell you it is not reciprocal. I have it in my power to render you a service, of which you will not at this moment exactly estimate the value, but hereafter you may regard it differently. You see me with distrust, but believe me it is for your own sake; I tell you that Lanti, in spite of his titles, and the varnish on his pictures and himself, is a rogue, and his establishment supported by gambling; and that very pretty little girl—"

"You speak very familiarly of the young lady," said Maurice indignantly.

"Well," said Ravinski, "we will not dispute

about terms—his very lovely daughter, then, is not the innocent you suppose ; she intends to marry you. You are very young, and I think it the duty of an honest man to save you from so unfortunate a snare, which may, if successful, overwhelm your after-life with regret and shame. Take time and reflect,” added he, seeing the eyes of Sir Maurice kindling with rage, as the bright moonbeams shone on his face ; “ I repeat, take time to reflect and observe. Good night !”

Sir Maurice was alone on the steps of his hotel, irritated and astonished beyond measure : doubting whether he heard aright, when so extraordinary a calumny was really urged against the noble and polished Lanti, and the young, graceful, and beautiful Hortensia ; doubting whether he ought immediately to follow Ravinski, and insist on his retracting his accusation, or fly to Lanti to warn him against his treacherous visiter ; doubting, in short, every thing, but the truth and perfection of Hortensia—to whom he directly addressed a letter, expressing the most devoted affection, and containing an entreaty that she would see him for

five minutes, that he might obtain from her own lips permission to address her father.

He despatched a confidential servant with his letter, and received in answer a few words of kindness, desiring him to call at the Hotel Lanti at nine the next morning, to ask for the Count, who was obliged to be absent at that hour, and, on hearing this, to ask leave to wait for him in the garden. The exactness of these directions seemed to imply that Hortensia was interested in his obtaining at least a hearing; and his rage at Ravinski, whose selfish object in dividing them was evident, knew no bounds. But it was not worth while, at such a time, to waste a thought on that incendiary.

He strictly obeyed Mademoiselle Lanti's direction, and at nine the next morning demanded to see Count Lanti, was informed he was absent, but expected to return in an hour, which interval he told the porter he should spend in the garden, and descended a flight of marble steps into a long walk, covered with trellis-work sustaining the most luxuriant vines, which entirely excluded the sun. At the end of this walk was a summer-house: the door was

open ; the guitar, tied with rose-colour and gold riband, was on a table, from which Hortensia rose to meet him.

The modesty and sensibility with which his professions were received, excited his most fervent admiration ; he could not sufficiently venerate the total absence of coquetry, the nature and frankness of her demeanour. But the dial announced the closing hour, and Hortensia observed her father must soon be at home ; and then turning to Bellew, she added, “ I do not wish that any one but my father should be in our confidence till we have quitted Rome, which we are soon to do. To any one else I should feel it painful to confess, that some unfortunate imprudences have so embarrassed my dear father, that he is under obligations (very painful to one of his spirit) to persons whose forbearance might cease towards him if offended.”

“ His friends surely cannot be offended by another being added to their number, and that other a son devoted to him for your sake.”

“ That is not precisely what I mean,” said Hortensia, a little embarrassed ; “ some of his

friends thought—wished—in fact.—But why should I conceal any thing from you? I *will* be frank: other friends wished to become his son also, and they might, by distressing him, avenge themselves on me.”

“Impossible!” exclaimed Bellew; “but if there existed a man capable of such base feeling, what could he do? My fortune is ample, and I need not tell you what my zeal would be in your father’s service.”

Hortensia thanked him, and paused, but soon added, “His embarrassments were not all pecuniary; unhappy disputes, in which circumstances involved him, have laid my father particularly under obligation to Count Ravinski: I was unlucky enough to please, but could not return his preference. I cannot now enter into a particular detail, but I have reason to think he regards us with a revengeful sentiment, which the knowledge that my affection is given to you will augment to a degree that may be dangerous to my father. Promise me then, dear Maurice, that you will not allow Ravinski to suspect the purport of your visit to-day, nor the terms on which we are.”

At any other time Bellew would have tried to prove how impossible it would be that a gentleman could conduct himself as she appeared to expect Ravinski would do ; but the recollection of the warning so lately received from him, seemed to justify Hortensia's suspicions of his malice, and he made the promise she required, and with still more reluctance agreed not to make any difference in his manner towards Ravinski.

This was a difficult task. It is always more difficult for a man to conceal dislike and displeasure, than for the other sex. Even the most artless and youthful females, from the habits of subjection and restraint in which they are educated, from the timidity which generally makes them dislike to show their feelings, are more successful in repressing their evidence, than men who have lived some time in the world.

Maurice could not entirely hide the contempt and resentment inspired by Hortensia's account of Ravinski's character. He was cold and constrained in his manner, in spite of all the efforts he made to appear natural and at ease ; and it

sometimes struck him that Ravinski observed and rather enjoyed the embarrassment he discovered. Lanti, whose reception of his addresses had been in the highest degree flattering, proposed that the marriage should take place when they arrived at Palermo, whither he was preparing to go.

In the mean time their former habits of life were unchanged: in the evenings the gaming proceeded in the larger saloon, while Maurice, Count Ravinski, the two ecclesiastics, and the old governess, attended Hortensia in her small apartment.

To make amends to Bellew for this addition to her society, he was permitted to spend some hours in the early part of the day in the summer-house, with no other interruption than the occasional presence of the governess: he never had the ill-fortune to find the retreat invaded by Ravinski, and looked forward with great anxiety to the moment he should quit Rome, and be rid of one whose presence was every hour more oppressive.

Hortensia seemed to feel its influence: she appeared anxious to avoid displeasing the Pole;

her gaiety seemed forced; and more than once Bellew felt irritated at the flattering manner in which she addressed Ravinski. It did not excite his jealousy, for he knew it was insincere; but how *could* the young and innocent Hortensia feign so well?—could she feign to all? The idea shocked him by its cruelty and injustice. When she did such violence to her artless nature, it was for her father's sake; and the sacrifice of her own feelings, and of their frank expression, proved the depth of her filial affection.

Immersed in these reflections, Bellew slowly retired from the Hotel Lanti. He retired the sooner, because Hortensia had complained of fatigue and headache, from having been long gazing on a procession from a window that admitted too many of the bright Italian sunbeams.

The evening, the warm southern evening, was one so fine, that it seemed like ingratitude not to spend it in the open air. He wandered about, and in half an hour, found he had unconsciously returned to the end of Lanti's garden. He gazed at the door, and saw by the

moonlight that it was a little open. Determined to mention the circumstance to Lanti's household, he entered, and proceeded by a narrow walk, on one side skirted with shrubs, divided on the other by a high hedge from a broad gravelled terrace. Voices, and the sound of footsteps in the walk beside him, arrested his attention and steps.

"Why should you persecute me? why become an enemy because you have been too dear a friend?" said one, in an earnest whisper. "How would my better fortune injure you?"

"It is not that it *injures* me, as you term it," was the reply; "but this instance is one in which *you* injure: a worse man would answer your purpose as well. I did not object to Darsigny, but here is a man who deserves better than to have you for his wife. He is young, and you shall not trick him."

"Then, in spite of my entreaties, you will warn him?"

"I *have* warned him; but he is young, and in love; your looks are more powerful than my advice."

During this discourse, a doubt, a painful

apprehension, seized the mind of Bellew. The voices of each speaker seemed not unknown to him. It was impossible, it could not be—yet the voice sounded like that of Hortensia!—and the male speaker, whose tones were still less suppressed, he should have supposed to be Count Ravinski.

In spite of his perturbation, Maurice felt it would be dishonourable to continue longer to avail himself of his accidental situation in order to satisfy himself that his suspicions were well-founded. Were he to return to Lanti, he could scarcely have hidden his agitation—were he to warn the household, he might not render any service to the imprudent or deceitful Hortensia. He returned to his own abode, unwilling to credit the evidence of his senses, though reflection every moment assured him their evidence was just.

The agreement between the circumstance alluded to by the male speaker with what had actually passed between him and Ravinski, struck him forcibly. He was tempted to ask the meaning of the warning from him; but if his suspicion wronged Hortensia, and she

was right in dreading Ravinski's malice, he should thus invite a slanderer to malign her! Should he own his perplexity at once to her?— This seemed to him the most honourable plan; and he repaired, as usual, the next day to the Hotel Lanti, and had hardly entered the summer-house, when he felt ashamed of his doubts, and confident of Hortensia's truth.

Her bright eyes grew brighter at his approach; her vivacity and cordiality made him certain he was welcome: he had not the resolution to own any of the speculations that had desecrated her image for a moment in his mind; he could not believe they had even raised a momentary doubt. She spoke of their voyage, of the plans for their after-life, and enquired about Ireland, France, and the political circumstances that might influence their living much in either country after their marriage: which seemed so entirely settled in her idea, that Bellew was glad to forget what he now considered the monstrous phantasy of the preceding night. His penitence for having entertained an injurious idea of Hortensia, even for a moment, made him more frank and fer-

vent in the expression of his devotion to her.

"Yet," said Hortensia, "how can I be certain that your present feelings would last under circumstances adverse to them? Suppose my father effected a temporary separation between us, would your attachment survive, after long absence, under the temptation of meeting others equally worthy of your love, or more so?"

Maurice eagerly interrupted her with the assurance that the last supposition was impossible.

"Suppose, then," said she, "that enemies tried, by slander, to make me *worthless* in your eyes?"

"Ah!" said Bellew, "that has been tried, and with no greater success than all attempts to divide us must have. I am glad you have reminded me of it."

"And by whom," said Hortensia, rising, "was that base stratagem tried?"

"What does it matter?" said Bellew; "let us only pity those who are capable of framing such vile falsehoods."

But Hortensia required the name of her

accuser with such eager vehemence, and made such a point of Maurice confiding it to her, that, as Ravinski did not seem to have required secrecy, Maurice confessed the conversation that had passed between him and the Pole.

Hortensia said little, but her lovely face for a few moments expressed a degree of anger and irritation of which he could hardly have supposed her to be capable. This passed however, and she also was able to smile at the ineffectual malice of Ravinski.

The arrangements for their departure proceeded rapidly, and their design seemed to be totally unsuspected by the Pole, who continued to spend his evenings at the house; and though he did not again seek an opportunity of warning Maurice, his manner to Hortensia was still tinged with the bitter and ironical expression which gave so much displeasure at the commencement of their acquaintance; but she no longer seemed to observe it, or, if she did, to feel any displeasure.

Ravinski rose to quit the apartment of Hortensia one evening at a much earlier hour than usual. Maurice, who always saw his departure

with satisfaction, was surprised to hear her press Ravinski's stay with an air of earnestness, needless as proceeding from politeness, and displeasing to himself, who, being naturally frank, saw with pain and surprise the graceful deception she practised with so much ease. Ravinski resumed his seat, bribed by her promising to sing some Polish airs; and he remained at Lanti's till the whole party broke up.

Some of the gentlemen were detained by one of the company, who asked them to sup with him. On his making the same invitation to Ravinski, who declined it, he said:—"Nay, *you* shall not refuse me. While we were at cards in the outer room, I heard Mademoiselle Lanti playing some of your national airs; and if you will join us, I promise you shall hear them by a performer as skilful, if not as handsome."

Ravinski yielded, and joined the party; but Maurice thoughtfully pursued his walk. As he entered an open space, where the moonbeams shone brightly, he perceived that he had, by mistake, taken the cloak and sword of Ravinski instead of his own, and, as he was then very

near the abode of the Pole, he resolved to leave word where his own should be sent, and these reclaimed.

For this purpose he turned into the street, which was deep in shadow. Just as he raised his hand to ring the bell, he felt himself struck with many blows, and perceived he was attacked by three men. Sir Maurice was strong, active, and brave, and defended himself as one endowed with those qualities might be expected to do in such circumstances ; and if his cloak, by embarrassing his arms, was of some disservice, it also saved him from several blows, and diminished the force of some that did reach him ; while his were so heartily given, that one of his assailants fell. The door of a house at the opposite side of the street opening, there issued several persons with lights, apparently to assist him, upon which his other opponents fled.

Bellew had received two slight wounds, but before leaving the spot, he was anxious to see the face of his dead enemy. In vain did he gaze : it was wholly unknown to him ! While he yet contemplated the features, and wondered

what had caused this attack, some of the persons who had pursued the fugitive assassins returned, exclaiming, that another of them had fallen, and was yet alive. Sir Maurice repaired to the spot, and found that the second robber had fallen from loss of blood, while attempting to escape ; and he caused him to be carried to his hotel. His own wounds were dressed, and found to be not dangerous ; but the surgeon pronounced those of the assassin to be mortal, and his death very near !

Bellew visited the chamber of the dying man, who perfectly retained his senses, and, on being made aware of his condition, requested very earnestly to see a priest, with whom he had been in conversation for some time when Maurice entered. He approached the bed with some curiosity to see his enemy, and inquired why, without any attempt to rob, he had attempted the life of one, who, not knowing, could not have offended him. The wounded person gazed on him with surprise, and asked, in his turn, if this was the man whom he had attacked ? When answered in the affirmative, he declared that the assault had been intended

for another. At first he appeared unwilling to reveal who that other was; but, upon being pressed to make the only atonement in his power to those he had intended to injure, he avowed that he had lain in wait for Count Ravinski, who was expected home at midnight; and at that hour a cavalier arriving, and preparing to enter, dressed in a cloak which resembled the usual attire of the Count, (as much as the imperfect light allowed them to discern,) he and his companions had set upon Sir Maurice, who had killed one, and wounded him. Feeling himself grow faint, he had fled, but sank from loss of blood, ere he had passed the next street.

Sir Maurice then tried to obtain the cause of his enmity to Ravinski, and to learn what was the motive of his companions. The faintness of failing nature was on the tongue of the dying ruffian, and a farther disinclination made him hesitate to speak; but the priest, (who had just received his confession,) urged him to fulfil a duty by enabling Count Ravinski to guard against his unknown foes; and he at length owned that "he was promised a

sum of money by some who conceived themselves aggrieved by the Count Ravinski. A person whom he had known for some time, and who was supposed to have been concerned in similar transactions before, had asked him to share the enterprise, which was undertaken at the request of a foreigner then residing at Rome. He either did not know, or chose to conceal who this person was, affirming that he was only assisting, and had not been the principal, who was named Gaetano Trentuno."

When Maurice first learned that the intention was to destroy Ravinski, conceiving it was right to acquaint him with what had occurred, he despatched a messenger to his hotel to summon him directly; and he arrived at the close of this confession, and put some questions to the wounded man. But life was passing from him; he lived but few minutes after Ravinski arrived,—who proposed to examine the body of the assassin who had been slain on the spot: in his pocket was found a note containing these words:—

"When your work is complete, send word

that the bracelet is found. On presenting it, you will receive the stipulated recompense."

With the note was a small parcel containing a bracelet of no great value, but of remarkable workmanship. The Pole examined both for some minutes, and holding up the bracelet, said, "Bellew, have you ever seen this before?"

It was indeed familiar to his eyes; he had often seen it on the arm of Hortensia!

Ravinski then, without speaking, held out the note to him.—Was it possible that these characters were traced by her hand? The writing seemed to dazzle him; long and in silence he contemplated the surprising similarity between that note and those he was in the habit of receiving from her. He could not deny, he would not admit it, but continued to hold the writing without speaking. At length, suddenly raising his head, he exclaimed, "This is accidental! She must have lost the bracelet, and offered some reward, and desired it might be claimed."

"What then," said Ravinski, "was the work he was to complete?"

A dispute ensued as to whether Hortensia should be permitted to know of the note and bracelet: Maurice expressing his firm belief that she would explain it; the Pole accusing him of wishing to give her an opportunity of deceiving him. "But," said he, "all I ask is, that you will not mention to her this adventure, or having seen me, for *one* day; and, as you will allow my safety is endangered either through her or others, my request cannot be deemed unreasonable."

To this Bellew acceded, and repaired to the summer-house of the hotel of Lanti. Hortensia's eyes sparkled when he entered. "You are come then at last," said she—"but *so* late!—but you *are* come."

Maurice entirely forgot the last twelve hours while they talked as usual. It did not require an effort to seem unchanged to her.

Half an hour after his arrival, a servant entered, who presented a small parcel to Hortensia, saying it was brought by one who said he was to receive a reward "for having found her bracelet." Involuntarily the eyes of Sir Maurice fixed themselves on her fair face.

With agitation scarce controllable, he beheld the rapid changes of her complexion, and the unusual expression of her eyes. She kept silence for some moments ; and as she received the bracelet, she trembled. At length she said, “ Bid him wait a few moments ; I must bring him some money,” and then quitted the summer-house.

Her absence was short, and she appeared composed on her return ; but Maurice, whose suspicions were now awakened, saw it was by exercising a strict empire over herself. “ Your bracelet is a favourite, Hortensia.”

“ It is—I had lost it—you perhaps think it is hardly worth my preference ; but these sort of fancies are unaccountable ; I have had it a long time.”

“ Oh, Hortensia,” said Sir Maurice, grasping her arm, “ tell me, I conjure you, why was it given to Gaetano Trentuno ?”

Hortensia started ; her colour fled, and returned, and fled again ; she appeared shocked and undecided ; but at length said, “ I might deceive you—I might account for it in some plausible manner, and turn aside your sus-

picion, or deny the truth of your information : but I scorn it ! Ought a villain to live who had tried to ruin my happiness and reputation ? *Ought* he to live who had traduced me to you ?"—Her eyes flashed fire, her lip trembled—

“ She in whose eye so modest and so bright
Love ever woke, and held a vestal fire ”—

seemed suddenly transformed into a fury.

“ Ravinski had been the most ungrateful, dishonourable, and remorseless of villains towards me,” she continued ; “ nothing but his blood could expiate his treachery—but it has been expiated—and you, Maurice, in the bitterness of my resentment, and my determined revenge, should only see a proof how deeply I prized, and how much I dreaded to lose, the heart of which he sought to deprive me.”

It was impossible that the horror her conduct inspired should not make Sir Maurice’s answer add to the irritation of Hortensia’s feelings, and that it should not discover the great change that had taken place in his own. That was the last time Bellew entered the house of Lanti—the last time Hortensia in hope and joy heard him express affection. He wrote to

her once more, a long and incoherent adieu, in which the passionate attachment he renounced, still struggled with the sense of her unworthiness; and the next day he quitted Rome, and heard not how the tidings of Ravinski's escape from her vengeance appeared to affect her.

CHAPTER VII.

THOUGH Sir Maurice no longer loved Hortensia, an inexplicable interest attached him to the recollection of the time that love had been the first feeling of his heart ; and for a considerable period he avoided female society, and still longer he distrusted and contemned the character of her whole sex, for her sake. Above all, he resolved never to marry—never to commit his happiness and honour to one who might prove another Hortensia. To avoid the opposition his friends might offer, and the ridicule with which his acquaintance might treat a resolution oftener made than kept, he did not announce it, but respectfully heard Lord Ros-tellan point out those young ladies whom he considered as suitable matches, and perceived Sir Patrick's willingness to accept him as a

son-in-law, without feeling flattered by the distinction, and without the slightest intention of availing himself of such favour. Oonagh's feelings he did not guess. He had heard Sir Patrick so often lament the superstitious prejudices with which his sister had inspired her ; he so distinctly remembered the conversations in which he had combated, and she had defended a determination pronounced with so much more energy and resolution than her gentle manners usually showed, that he did not, and could not doubt its sincerity.

When at Paris he had met Hortensia as the wife of M. d'Aurillac, he was deeply affected by seeing her again. He almost doubted the reality of the causes which had divided them. It seemed so strange that a time *could* come which obliged them to meet as slight and indifferent acquaintance ! Perhaps, on his side, this would have been impossible, but for the ease with which Hortensia adopted—gracefully, but completely adopted—such a mode of treating him. Few, who did not watch like Oonagh Lynch, could have perceived the indications of more excited feeling. This, in fact, wore

gradually away : the more constantly he saw Madame d'Aurillac, the more he saw to condemn, independent of the past.

Three years, at the age of Sir Maurice Bellew, make a great change in the feelings and the understanding of a young man. He, too, grew indifferent ; and when he left Paris to rejoin Sir Patrick, he had forgotten Hortensia had not always been Madame d'Aurillac.

When he had spent a month at Kiltarle, he had an opportunity of observing Oonagh constantly ; and circumstances having thrown them together as companions, she daily appeared to more advantage in his eyes. Timid, but not shy, the slightest manifestation of goodwill banished the still reserve of her first manner, and she became immediately as frank and confiding as she was mild and unaffected. Though reserved persons often lose opportunities of being beloved by those who associate with them, from that distance which, to superficial observers, often passes for a slight shade of dislike, they are loved in intimacy the more, as if their hearts were prizes whose value was enhanced by the difficulty of their acquirement.

Oonagh's conventual prejudices were not remarkable to one who in habits was a Frenchman, and consequently but little used to converse with young unmarried ladies, and still less prepared to find them free from the modes of thinking their education was calculated to inspire. Her unconscious disappointment at Sir Maurice's indifference, by removing all anxiety to please, all fear to offend one who she perceived would never be more than a friend, had freed her manner from embarrassment. She spoke with the ease and frankness of a sister, the submission of a pupil, and the gentleness of a woman; and Sir Maurice had begun to regard her with deep interest, and some admiration, when Schenk disturbed her resignation by awaking a hope which she had ceased to cherish: the turbulent palpitation of suspense returned, the vigilant observation that sought an injury in every look and tone, the alternations of hope and fear, all the anguish of protracted doubt which could not be confided.

Though Schenk had become her confident, she shrank from his guessing how deeply she wished the success of his spell. She tried to

wait the result with patience. "If I could only be sure that at the expiration of any given time Maurice would love me, I should *rest*; I could attend to all I heard, understand what I read, enjoy the air, the sun, the skies, (and oh, how much!)—I should not feel as if bound to a wheel that is always revolving—Will that day ever come? But Schenk is deceived; he spoke too confidently, too enthusiastically—or he deceives me. Would I had never heard of his spell! I was at peace, content to be a nun;—now, when I return to the convent, how cold, sad, and chill will it seem! I shall never again know what peace is!—Well, I can perform all my duties, though I can take no pleasure in them."

Oonagh had no friend near to assure her of a fact, that, if known in early youth, and remembered when this world's combat is begun, would save us from a thousand follies—God has joined our pleasures with our duties; in vain does man try to separate them. Let any man recall his past years to his mind—let him remember those he has spent in the indulgence of his tastes, his passions, perhaps his vices; let him

distinctly remember, even *while* they were passing, the imperfection of their enjoyment, the self-reproach and fear which qualified and interrupted them. Let him also recall the years in which he has been forced to say, "I have no pleasure in them;"—days spent in privation, solitude, and the fulfilment of painful duties, uncheered by the voice of encouragement, sympathy, or approbation; and he will admit, that the hope his obedience (imperfect as it was) did not displease—the recollection of that divine promise, "I, even I, am he that comforteth you"—lightened these dark, dark days, while custom rendered his irksome duties light; and such a period, even while it was passing, became one of the happiest in his life.

But Oonagh was at that age which can foresee no part of life when youth should have passed; it seemed to her, that if she was not Maurice Bellew's wife, she could find no other point of interest in the future. From the eternal recurrence of her anxious thoughts on this subject, she was roused by an impression of which she hardly dared to admit the truth. Was it an illusion?—was Schenk more than

mortal wise?—was she the happiest of human beings?—or did she fancy, only fancy, that Maurice loved her? Days, even two weeks, passed in astonished anticipation of this certainty. But it came, it came at last, and gave the glorious hope of a future, which pain and sorrow could not reach, for it would be spent with Maurice Bellew. Ten, twenty, thirty years of perfect happiness is a long perspective at eighteen—almost an eternity! Indeed, Miss Lynch was frequently calculating how long the utmost duration of mortal union could prove;—surely she had heard of half a century of life and love between well-assorted lovers? and she began to hear all she wished to hear without the dread of its proving an illusion.

About this time, much notice was taken of an incident that excited the fears of many Jacobites. A gentleman was taken up on suspicion, whose papers and baggage were strictly examined; nothing appeared to justify his seizure, unless his possessing a rather singular medal, with the letters L. and J. interwoven on one side, and executed in small precious stones, surrounded with a wreath of palm and laurel

enamelled ; on the other side with the following verses inscribed ; the opinion they gave was too desponding to gratify the party (at that time) whose sentiments they express.

“ This mystic knot unites two royal names,
Victorious Louis and long-suffering James,
Pious and true asserters of the Cross,
Whether it be by conquest, or by loss.
Their glory equal : different is their fate ;
Laurels on one, palms on the other wait.”

When this circumstance was in discussion at Kiltarle, Bellew observed, he still trusted those lines did not contain a prophecy, and that laurels as well as palms might one day be an equally appropriate decoration for either initial, adding, he wondered so timid a seer was so positive in prediction.

“ He is not the only discouraging soothsayer we have had respecting his Majesty. Did you never hear that Lady Anne Hyde persuaded the Duke, as he then was, to consult an astrologer at Breda, just before he was married ?” said Moriarty.

“ And what,” asked Oonagh, “ was then predicted ?”

“ Oh, they said he drew lots with some gentlemen who accompanied him, and each found

some circumstance relative to their future lives justly foretold ; and on the lot drawn by his Majesty, these two lines appeared,

‘ All hope is vanish’d
From him who’s twice banish’d.’ ”

“ A contrivance, I suppose,” said Bellew, rather scornfully, “ of the people then about him to inculcate more conciliatory manners in his Majesty than his natural frankness would allow him to display.”

“ Not unlikely,” said Moriarty, calmly and candidly, as he quitted the apartment.

“ I should feel rather curious, if I did not think it wrong,” said Oonagh, “ to have my horoscope taken.”

“ By all means,” said Maurice, gaily. “ I know that Schenk upholds the science of astrology.”

“ Yes, sir,” replied Schenk, “ I avow it ; I cannot believe that the ‘ heavenly arches’ are ‘ decked only for show ; and with these glittering shields,’

‘ T’ amaze poor shepherds watching in the fields.
I ’il not believe that the least flower that pranks
Our garden borders, and our common banks ;
And the least stone that in her guardian lap
Our mother earth doth covetously wrap,
Hath some peculiar virtue of its own,
And that the glorious stars of Heaven have none.’ ”

He clasped his hands, and his sharp wandering eyes seemed to seek the meaning of the very clouds that the sea-wind was driving across the sky.

Maurice laughed. "Well, my good friend," said he, "you shall cast the nativity of Miss Lynch, and also mine, this night."

Schenk agreed, and went to prepare his spells.

Oonagh was beginning to remonstrate with Maurice, but he laughed and said, "Dearest, forgive this folly, but it will be so amusing to see the fortune that Schenk will make a point of foreseeing for you and me. Out of respect to your father, he ought, and I dare say will, promise a principality or two of most satisfactory dimensions."

Oonagh smiled, and sighed.

They repaired to the long gallery, and ascended the stairs to the turret occupied by Schenk. The moon was young and pale, but the stars, now unveiled by mist, fixed their clear cold eyes on the deep, which was bounding below them, and mocked their scintillation with a faint reflection of light. A table was covered

with mathematical and astronomical instruments, where Schenk displayed the nativity of Oonagh, and proceeded to explain the position of the stars at her birth, and the influence that position was to produce on her fate. He set forth the qualities of mind it would induce, and the happiness of her early circumstances; and dwelt rather on these than on her after-life, of which she learned little more than "born under such stars, the native would ever conduct herself irreproachably, and finally attain the most glorious destiny allotted to the daughters of earth."

Oonagh thought she could easily interpret what was meant by "the most glorious destiny on earth."

Bellew smiled. "Come, Mr. Schenk," said he, "do not let my fate be less agreeable than that of Miss Lynch."

"It does not depend on me, sir," said the German; "I only repeat the result of my calculations." He then placed the horoscope of Sir Maurice before them, and proceeded to explain the influence of *his* stars. He described to which of them were owing the favourable com-

mencement of his life, and promised martial honours, from the aspect of Aldebaran and Belatrix in Orion: at length he paused. "Sir Maurice, you are incredulous? I will not weary you with the repetition of other indications of fortune—I have said enough to show you our mode of prediction, which is all, I conclude, that could excite your curiosity."

"No; positively, Schenk, I will have it all; I insist upon knowing if all my stars have the same good-will to me as Aldebaran and Belatrix."

Schenk still hesitated; but on Sir Maurice's continued request and raillery, seeing that Oonagh also smiled, "I will continue, for a disregarded prediction cannot signify; were you a believer in our art, I could foretell what would make you, perhaps, uneasy. The Caput Algol Medusæ is so posited as to threaten a violent death, or heavy misfortune; 'tis the most dangerous star in the heavens, and its worst aspect is on the nativity of Sir Maurice Bellew."

"'Tis unkind of the Caput Algol Medusæ," said Bellew, laughing, "and entirely without

provocation ; perhaps you might persuade Aldebaran to make my peace with this ungenerous star."

Schenk made no reply ; and Oonagh heard the menacing description of her lover's nativity with little awe,—he was standing by, and she was then too happy for fear.

The stores of human happiness are like those belonging to the King ; they have a mark,—fate's *broad arrow*—the stamp of imperfection,—we fear to lose them, we feel they cannot last—

" The dread of future ill
Exiles our present joy."

I have seen the favourites of fortune, from the internal consciousness that grief and disappointment must wait on the lot of man, endeavour to grieve immoderately for an insufficient cause, unconsciously trying to persuade themselves, that they were thus paying the tribute due to the instability of human felicity.

That tribute Oonagh was soon called to pay : in the first weeks of Maurice's professed attachment, she was too much amazed at the completion of her wish, to examine too curiously the mode of obtaining it ; but the first delicious

triumph over, she considered with deep solicitude every look and expression of affection. Love gained by magic, was like the money of the sorcerer, which, when kept a while, seemed only withered leaves clipt into its form, as light and valueless! Was the attachment produced by a spell? might it not vanish in an hour, like the animation of inebriety? perhaps be succeeded by hatred and loathing,—at best by indifference?

“ I am not the natural passion of his heart—that has not been given; I have stolen it by a stratagem, and robbed some blessed creature to whom he would have voluntarily surrendered it: she will perhaps wear out her days in a cloister, as the deceitful Oonagh should have done.”

And this was not the only reflection, arising from her situation, that tormented her. Sometimes, when Maurice confided his opinions, feelings, or account of past events, with the openness their relative position produced, another species of self-reproach struck the heart of Miss Lynch. “ He speaks every thought to one who cannot return his confidence? I must ever have a

concealment from him ; I must ever be a falsehood, a trick, a juggle, seen but not known."

With this feeling, a thousand words spoken at random appeared to her conscious mind an implied reproach ; many expressions which, under other circumstances, might have been deemed complimentary, overwhelmed her with humiliation ; and she was astonished to find it possible to grieve and fear when chosen by and affianced to Maurice Bellew.

There were moments, however, in which this was forgotten ; when she was sure that, had she never known the German's fatal spell, still Maurice would have loved her. Then she longed to try whether that love would survive his knowledge of the means by which it was gained. Her heart was on her lips—they seemed to disclose her secret, but closed again ; she would not *yet* relate a secret which might cost her so dear ; she would wait a few days, till she saw more of his disposition ; and she waited, silent, anxious, and bewildered, fearing that every throb of her heart might be audible, and speak for her. But how could she ever speak ? her promise to Schenk bound her to silence on

the service he had rendered her ; the penalty her mother underwent for having failed in a similar engagement, warned her to avoid incurring the risk ; and honour smote her heart with the reflection that she was bound to keep her promise inviolate—to refuse herself the relief of confessing all to Bellew—of obtaining his pardon for her stratagem, or, at least, of seeing how far his interest in her would remain. But it could not be ; the gulf between them would never close ; entire confidence could not exist ; the highest pleasure of friendship must ever be wanting to their union.

Many times, when Bellew was speaking of the female-character generally,—the value he expressed for the quality of frankness and sincerity, the praise he gave to her natural and unaffected manner, the dislike he expressed for the opposite defect, pierced the heart of Oonagh, and all the more as he spoke with peculiar feeling and vivacity on the subject. The recollection of Hortensia made him execrate all double-dealing ; and all he said was by Oonagh applied to herself. Her's were the “wearing days and sleepless nights” of those

who have made themselves idols of clay, and worship, though conscious of their fragility; and those who are tempted to scorn her distress as self-created, should endeavour to remember whether the graver trifles of life, wealth, power, rank, have not deprived them of rest and ease, as completely as her doubtful claim on Maurice's heart had crossed the peace of Oonagh.

Sir Patrick, who had with pleasure declared his approval of an attachment which ensured the fulfilment of his early plans for his daughter's establishment, prepared to celebrate the marriage; but as he did not wish to draw observation on his family, the event was to take place with as much privacy as could be observed in a family of rank at that period. The concealed feelings of his daughter he would, in any case, have been very unlikely to discern. He, too, had his idols, and they occupied every meditation of his day and every dream of his night:—his foreign correspondence; the detailed accounts he transmitted of the state of political feeling at home; his endeavours to win partisans, to conciliate the indifferent, to deceive the hostile, were unremitting; his ef-

forts to forward the interests of his party were sincere; and those he made to obtain a preference over his friends, to intercept the promise of reward of which those friends might be deemed worthy, were equally sincere, and more ardent. He was also deeply engaged in the mining speculation which was under the superintendence of Schenk, whose reported expectations of a profitable result were in the highest degree encouraging.

Such was the state of the inhabitants of Kiltarle; and those who beheld from the sea the grey, massive towers of its gloomy castle frowning in loneliness from the bleak coast, could scarcely have supposed the intense affection, the scheming ambition, the racking anxiety, which swayed the inmates of its secluded chambers.

Yet they, like their fellow-pilgrims on earth, had moments, hours, and days worthy of envy, of regret, in recollection — a foretaste of the happiness graciously accorded to man, even in his present state of folly, error, and vice:—dare we compare it to the indulgence of a parent, who allows his offspring to pursue

their childish sports at intervals, that they may come refreshed and animated to the struggle of necessary attainment and the exertion of their still feeble intellect? "*As one whom his mother comforteth,*" he gives these days!—Oh, man! be grateful while they last! and when they are taken away, be grateful they *were* once granted!

One of these bright hours was given to Maurice and Oonagh as they walked one evening together on the shore of the wild Atlantic. The wind was almost hushed; but sometimes an unfrequent gust seemed like the sob of a passionate infant after its sorrow is appeased. The storm was over, but a high rolling swell burst in pillars of surf on some rocky points of the shore; here and there a sea-bird with a soft and mournful cry, hovered over, or plunged into the waves; while others, standing on points of rock, remained immoveable and patient as sentinels, gazing on the turbulent waters as calmly hermits muse on the world's warfare. The day, though declining, was still bright and genial, and they wandered in happy silence on the beach.

“I wish,” said Miss Lynch, “the land and sea we now look on formed the whole world ; that the earth contained nothing but Kiltarle !”

“An odd wish, Oonagh, but a flattering one to me. At the moment you spoke, I was thinking how much too easy it would be to forget that the world contained anything but Kiltarle ; to forget the active duties that loyalty and patriotism demand ; in short, I feel and fear that happiness has a tendency to render us indolent and selfish.”

“Are you so happy ?” replied Oonagh, gazing anxiously in his face. “Maurice, dear Maurice, are you *sure* you love me ?”

“Are you not sure I do ?” said he, looking at her with surprise.

“I try to think so, but I cannot always believe it.”

“Oonagh, if I did not know you to be the most unaffected and frank of human beings, I should imagine you were pretending a little coquettish distrust, to amuse yourself with the earnestness of my justification, or my irritation at being disbelieved.”

The praise included in this reproach filled

Oonagh's eyes with tears. She looked mournfully in his face—a confession trembled on her lip; but her voice failed, and in another moment she remembered her solemn promise to Herman Schenk.

Bellew supposed his words had grieved her, and disclaimed the intention of doing so, adding:—"Your spirits are naturally cheerful and even, but not gay, and the loneliness of this place has certainly lowered them; but why more so now, than a few weeks since? Surely we, of all human kind, ought *now* to be the happiest."

"Do you know," said Oonagh, "that very consideration alarms me?"

"I hope," said Bellew smiling, "you may never have cause for any other alarm."

"What I have just said appears ridiculous, because I have not explained it; but do not all we hear, read, and see, teach that happiness in this world cannot last? The eternal condition of man's sojourn on earth is changing: we have reached happiness—we may not rest upon it. As soon as it is complete, it must change: the worm eats on, even while the rose-

bud swells and blushes—it opens to exhale its perfume, but withers before we can breathe it ! I am, (when I believe you love me,) *too* happy. A secret voice seems to tell me, I have reached my point of fortune ; this world can *give* no more—But—oh, Maurice ! how much it may *take* !”

“ You are too fanciful, Oonagh : because a man has performed half his voyage in safety, must he expect to be wrecked ere the close ? Such conclusions are as destitute of reasonable ground as the promises of Bellatrix and Aldebaran, which Schenk holds forth to us. You have too much mind, my dear Oonagh, to give way to timid, desponding feelings, from such childish bodings. If, in this life, sorrows must come, let us not anticipate, or seek to extract them from inadequate causes.”

Self-reproach always renders us timorous, if it does not make us desperate ; and Miss Lynch could not own that it mixed its bitter with her present felicity.

The garments arrived which were intended for her marriage, and jewels of great value were the gift of Sir Maurice. Oonagh con-

templated them with pleasure. These objects seemed to give reality to what was passing; it could not be a dream, as all around shared the impression. When summoned to hear the arrangement by which the law was to secure the ample possessions of both families for their mutual advantage, though she understood little, and listened to less, of the tautology the law enjoins as a protection against its own sinuous evasions, the monotonous sounds uttered were soothing to her ear. They seemed to convey an additional assurance that Maurice and herself would henceforward be inseparable—inseparable in name and fortune, as in heart and affection!

Moriarty was to join their hands in the chapel adjoining that gallery where Schenk had first offered her the spell so successful in the subjugation of Bellew's heart. The German presented his congratulation to her, "hoping that she, at least, would remember with just favour a science which had served her so well." This was the only allusion he had ever made to the circumstance.

A meeting was to take place at Kenmare

between some persons politically connected with Sir Patrick ; other engagements prevented him from attending it, but Sir Maurice was to go instead, and to return on the day of his marriage. This absence was only for twenty-four hours ; yet Oonagh felt more grieved than she would own, at this short separation, though it might probably be the last that might occur for years between herself and Bellew.

On the bridal morning Sir Patrick entered his daughter's chamber betimes, and, after congratulating her upon the approaching event, he entreated she would be ready by eleven o'clock to attend the chapel, for ere that hour Sir Maurice was expected ; and, when the ceremony should be over, Sir Patrick was to proceed to the meeting at Kenmare, with some papers for consideration, the preparation of which had engaged him so much that it had withheld him from accompanying his intended son-in-law on the excursion from which the latter was now returning.

Oonagh proceeded with her toilette ; and, had her thoughts been sufficiently disengaged to enjoy the triumph of its success, there would

have been much to gratify her vanity in the contemplation of the image reflected in her mirror. The pure white damask robe was not whiter than her skin ; and her hair looked the more raven-black for the long chains of pearl twisted among its braids. She was paler than usual ; but at times a light flush wandered over, and then faded on her cheek. Her dress was complete, except a bouquet, with which her attendant presented her : it was composed of that pale rose which was afterwards worn as the emblem of that unhappy Prince, the last of the race her father served—the rose of York, but not now

“ Twined with her blushing foe.”

Oonagh prepared to place the flowers in her bosom ; but she heard the rapid tread of horses enter the court-yard, and they fell from her hand. Joyce Malone raised, and again offered them ; and Oonagh, while hastily arranging them, perceived that the fall had shed their fair petals — the roses were gone — the stalks alone remained !

“ Troth, Miss Oonagh my darling,” said

Joyce Malone, "but this is a bad sign; for I dipped the stalks of these roses in holy water, and it is myself that tied a little slip of vervain with them, and all to bring luck, and keep off the witches; and there is not one of them left, nor the vervain itself! And now you are dressed, you look too pale, and too heavenly, and more like Miss Honor O'Neill, at her profession in the Abbaye-aux-Bois—that day year her lover, the French gentleman, was killed!"

Oonagh descended to the gallery, and found Sir Patrick. She concluded that Bellew had retired to change his riding-dress for one proper for the occasion; and not choosing to disturb her father, who was walking up and down the gallery in deep reflection, she sat down in one of the windows without speaking. The silence endured for half an hour, and Miss Lynch began to wonder at her lover's non-appearance, when Sir Patrick, starting as from a dream, exclaimed:—"Where is Bellew? What can detain him?"

"I imagine he is dressing," she replied.

"Impossible!" said her father; "they have not told me of his arrival."

“ I thought I heard horses :—is he not come, then ? ”

Sir Patrick questioned his servants, who said, Sir Maurice had not yet arrived ; and, as it was but half-past eleven, though his mistress might secretly accuse him of tardiness, his father-in-law harboured no anxiety on the subject. But when two hours more had passed away, his absence excited general surprise.

Sir Patrick became impatient, and his daughter alarmed. At first she tried to appease her uneasiness by supposing that Bellew, from anxiety to be at home early, had urged his horse to such speed that the animal had sunk from fatigue ere the journey was completed. Other horses were despatched to meet him, under the care of Sir Patrick's confidential servant, Terence O'Brien ; and though Oonagh often turned her anxious eyes to an ancient clock, in a magnificently inlaid case, surmounted with a brazen figure of Time, her father retired to his library with Moriarty, apparently satisfied that nothing material had occurred to detain Bellew, who would probably soon appear.

Three times had the dust-clogged tongue of the old clock stammered forth the hour ere Sir Patrick returned to his daughter ; and on this occasion he used many arguments to prove that nothing unusual *could* have befallen her lover, which only served to convince her that Sir Patrick would not have attempted to combat her fears had he considered them as entirely vain. If he did, he soon met with cause to change his opinion, for he was summoned, on the return of Terence O'Brien from Kenmare, to hear that his messengers had not met, or heard any tidings of Sir Maurice in their way thither ; though upon reaching the house of one McKenna, a tenant of Sir Patrick's, in whose house Bellew had lodged on the preceding night, he positively affirmed that gentleman had, (after spending the evening in company with those persons whom it had been his object to meet,) ordered his horses, and proceeded from the house as early as four in the morning ; which intelligence was confirmed by a blacksmith who lived a mile farther on the road towards Kiltarle.

This man declared, that being at work before

daylight, he heard the tramp of horses, and wondering who was so early on a journey, he had the curiosity to go to the door, about sunrise: it was sufficiently light to distinguish objects with tolerable accuracy; he saw a gentleman attended by two servants:—he had often seen Sir Maurice, and was sure it was he; and what rendered him still more confident was, that the horse on which the stranger was mounted, was a remarkably large strawberry roan horse, which he had, on a former occasion, shod for Sir Maurice. The travellers passed at a brisk trot, and were soon out of sight, pursuing the road to Kiltarle.

What had subsequently befall them could not be discovered; the road for some miles farther was lonely and wild, and no one in the villages, through which their way would afterwards have led them, could give the slightest trace of their journey.

To Sir Patrick, it appeared not unreasonable that some circumstance had arisen to require Bellew's presence elsewhere; that he had written to account for his delay, but the messenger to whom it was entrusted, (probably some pea-

sant in the neighbourhood,) had from carelessness, or mischance, failed to present the letter, which might still arrive. Maurice was young, strong, and active, had with him two able servants, and all (as was the custom of that period) well armed; nothing could have befallen him in the probable course of events.

Oonagh felt that, if he had written, he would have insured intelligence of so much importance reaching her hands in safety; but two conjectures, however unwilling she was to admit them, forced themselves on her mind. Either Maurice had perished by the hand of an assassin, or the inebriation caused by the German's spell had ceased, and the horror of giving his hand to one whom he did not love, had made him fly from the country. No other causes were sufficient to account for his mysterious absence.

Dreadful to her as was this last suspicion, it was the most welcome of the two suppositions. It was also the most likely; for had Maurice died, is it credible that no trace of struggle—a weapon, a glove, a sound remembered by some, whose fortune had led them

near the spot where his pure and noble blood had been shed—should have served as testimony of his deplorable end? Most of the peasants were vassals of Sir Patrick, the rest of Lord Rostellan. In that part of the country, Sir Maurice, the heir of both families, was considered as the highest object of human veneration, and his person well known to all. In so lonely and poor a district, foreign plunderers had too little hope of gain to harbour in quest of it. Who, then, could have proved either a secret or open enemy?

No; he had awoke to the delusion of having loved Oonagh Lynch! perhaps not aware that she had known and created the delusion. The pain he feared to inflict, by declaring it no longer existed, made him pause and hesitate ere he made the grievous avowal; he was now, perhaps, seeking words which might not seem to wound, when they spoke his indifference—while a secret internal conviction told him, that she could not hear it and live! Or he was trying to resolve on redeeming the vow at which he shuddered, to fulfil his engagement at the price

of his peace—his honour against his happiness ! And the combat still endured ;—it was long, but Bellew would conquer—he would still come to offer a hand dis-severed from his heart, and when he did so, surely she should discern his reluctance, willingly free him, and resign her place in this world's warfare—a place she seemed to herself to have striven for unworthily, and in contradiction to the presentiment which had first justly indicated a convent as the natural haven of a heart not made for this world to fill. All anxiety would then be over : to hear of Bellew's happiness, though shared with another ; to know she had not blighted it ; to hear he proved himself a worthy successor to her father, would still be enough to gild the gloom of her life-long seclusion.

She had time for these and a thousand other painful meditations, for Bellew came not ; and Sir Patrick, who, by evening, became also a sharer of her anxiety, instead of going to Kenmare that night, waited in hopes of receiving the tidings which he assured her could not fail to arrive ere morning, when he purposed to go

himself to Kenmare, and examine Mc Kenna, as to the time and circumstances of Bellew's departure.

Oonagh took the pearl chains from her hair, and laid aside her bridal robe, hardly certain that she was not suffering from the oppression of a wild and frightful dream.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE sleep of sorrow is often long and heavy ; but the misery of anxiety pierces through the light slumber fatigue forces on our eye-lid. Oonagh started into recollection every few minutes of that weary night, though no sound but the clock, the watch-dog, and the waves lashing the sea-beach, broke its silence ; and sometimes from the land-ward side the long dismal shriek of the fern-owl sounded like the first announcement of bad tidings.

Oonagh was beginning to hope for the approach of dawn, when she heard the sound of some stir in the lower part of the house. It appeared to include the tread of men, and the muttering conversation of hoarse, low voices.

“ Could Bellew have arrived ? could he now

be proceeding to inform Sir Patrick of the cause of his delay? He was safe then—and within a few paces.”

Her first impulse was to start from her bed, put on a dressing-gown, and fly to her father's apartment; but ere she had reached the door of her chamber, other reflections induced her to relinquish that intention. If Bellew came to postpone their marriage, she by openly testifying her anxiety about him, would seem trying to hold him to his late purpose by every feeling of generosity and honour. She would wait; her father would send to tell her, if so much happiness, as the knowledge of his safety, was in store for her. She would have time to seem composed: she sat down trembling. Some minutes elapsed; no person approached; though the noises were dispersed over the castle, and it appeared as if all in it were stirring, yet no message came!

Suddenly several voices arose, steps in different directions took place, a universal movement seemed to prevail. All these sounds ceased, and a profound silence followed. After waiting a time that appeared to her a century, but

which in reality could not have exceeded twenty minutes, she could no longer bear the suspense, and repaired to the room occupied by Joyce Malone, who was not, however, there, nor did she answer the call of Oonagh, who now hastened to her father's chamber. The most profound silence reigned there; no answer was returned when she knocked at the door. Oonagh concluded her father had retired to the inner chamber, which was that in which he slept; and she tried to open the door of his library, but discovered that it was locked or bolted.

At another moment she would hardly have ventured to break on his solitude, but her anxiety was now beyond control: she resolved to return to her apartment and reach his by a small staircase from the gallery above, which terminated in a low door, concealed by the arras-hangings of his bedchamber. This plan was soon executed; she knocked, but receiving no answer, at length softly opened the door.

The curtain was partly open on that side of Sir Patrick's bed, which was disordered, as if he had lately risen; his clothes were lying on a

chair, his sword also; the lamp still burned, though the dawn of day was now sufficiently powerful to permit all objects to be seen with tolerable distinctness.

Oonagh gazed vacantly round the room for some moments, when unusual appearances caught her eyes. An ivory crucifix, which usually stood on a bracket of the same material against the wall, was lying broken on the floor. The arras was partly hanging from the wall. A carved oak bench stood at the wall beyond the bed; the back was an arched rail, the points terminated in a star—the crest, with a scroll beneath each, bearing the motto of the Lynch family, “*Surgente spero* ;” and on this bench was spread the crimson damask coverlet of the bed, and apparently some of the bedclothes beneath it. On the floor she perceived one of her father’s gloves, and the rising day now showed it was wet with blood, plashes of which were near it also.

A desperate expectation of some unknown evil possessed the mind of Oonagh at the sight—she rushed forward, seized, and withdrew the coverlet, and beheld the inanimate body of

Sir Patrick stretched on the bench ! Fierce defiance still lurked in the lines of his face, and his still unclosed eyes glared wildly ; the crimson cushion on which he lay, contrasted with his pale cheek, and his firmly closed lip alone denoted the rigidity of death.

Oonagh gave one long shriek at the sight : like all witnesses of unforeseen destruction, she could not believe life was actually extinguished, and her first impulse was to seek assistance. She ran through the next room to the door at which she had first vainly tried to obtain admittance, and, wholly forgetful of that circumstance, made repeated attempts to open it, calling to all who she thought might perhaps be within hearing ; but the unbroken silence and quiet continued.

She returned distractedly to her father ; the bright full sunshine was on his ghastly face, and even the few minutes that had elapsed from the first discovery, had produced more certain evidence that human help was evermore vain for him !

To the sad, to those even who have long been heavily afflicted, the many pleasant objects

with which God has graciously strewed our path, are more or less exhilarating. A wood in full leaf, a field covered with blossoms; the long, long grass of a meadow ready for the scythe, waved by the soft summer-wind; the sweet song of the skylark, thrush, or black-bird; the sight of a flower-garden in the pride of summer, are still pleasures—mixed with sadness, 'tis true—but pleasures, when less simple gratifications are abhorrent, when vanity and ambition are palsied and dead within us: but in the first period of a misfortune, such sights seem to mock us. The gay, hot sunbeams gleaming on the bed where the dearest of our friends has just closed his eyes on their light for ever, fall like thunderbolts on our hearts; we would hide our misery from their search, and leave them for those who can still rejoice in this world's light.

Oonagh shrank from them;—she saw her father was dead. How had he died? evidently by the hand of another; but who was his fatal enemy? in his own castle, surrounded by his dependents! They had parted but a few hours since; she found his remains abandoned by all;

yet could not imagine how the deplorable catastrophe was wrought. Could this event be connected with the absence of Sir Maurice? was it known in the castle? were his vassals treacherous? or how had the secret murderer reached him?

Miss Lynch sank on her knees by her father, and prayed distractedly. When her recollection grew less confused, she again passed through the private door, and called for assistance; this time she was quickly answered by Joyce Malone and Terence, who perceived she was already acquainted with her misfortune, which she found they had come to disclose.

The circumstances of the event were thus recounted:—Late at night, a sharp knocking at the gate had induced Sir Patrick to admit three persons, who presented Sir Maurice Bellew's ring in token of their being despatched from him. After Terence, by Sir Patrick's desire, had led the way to the library, the porter invited the rest of the company (consisting of several persons) into the great hall: some complained of fatigue and thirst, on which he courteously offered to call a fellow-servant, who

would provide some refreshment. He went out for the purpose, and the greater part of the company followed Terence and their companions to Sir Patrick's library. The foremost presented a letter, observing that Sir Maurice had advised instant attention might be paid to its contents. They were written in a cypher in which he had already received many despatches, and while taking a cursory glance of this one, he was informed by the messenger, that they bore a warrant against him for high treason, for which he was then apprehended. Those who had followed their companions to the library, now entered; their number, and all being well-armed, showed their prisoner that resistance would be vain.

From their entrance having been gained by presenting the seal-ring of Sir Maurice, there was every reason to suppose he had fallen into their hands, or perished in resisting them; circumstances calculated so show Sir Patrick that the Government were well acquainted with all it was for his interest and safety to keep from them. He could not doubt that attainder and death awaited him, if he submitted; and

his chance of escape by open opposition was equally unlikely. His servants and retainers, dispersed, at rest, and unexpecting, could not be summoned to his aid; his opponents were too numerous to encounter with a single arm with any hope of success.

Too brave, and too much used to difficulty and danger to lose his self-possession, he heard their errand without apparent discomposure; examined the warrant with curiosity, but without any seeming apprehension; and acquiesced with indifference to the proposal of sealing up his papers; while he internally revolved the possibility of hazarding an expedient that still seemed to afford some hope.

Were it possible to join his friends in France, the hour that restored King James would bring back all that he must now cede to his enemies. He therefore expressed himself confident of being able to satisfy the Government of his integrity; offered some casket of papers for inspection; and, when near the low door of the arras-hangings, he suddenly struck down one of the officers, over whose prostrate body he leaped, and hastily ascended the little stair-

case, as one whose life depends upon his speed. The low and narrow door only allowed his pursuers to follow singly; and, as they knew not the castle, there was a fair prospect of his eluding their search.

Perhaps he would have done so; but two of the party, who had remained at the gate, on receiving a hasty notice from one of their companions from the window, joined the pursuit, and, having the advantage of being so much nearer, soon overtook Sir Patrick, who was proceeding to Duncaskin Bay, in the intention of escaping by water. Finding himself detained and surrounded, there was nothing left for it, but to cut his way through his enemies, or sell his life dearly in the attempt. His adversaries were well armed, while he had only a *couteau de chasse*. They were for some time deterred from closing on him, from the certainty that the first who did so must perish. But their friends were advancing, and so were some of Sir Patrick's servants. The first of his opponents was cut down, and met with instant death: the second succeeded in wrenching the *couteau de chasse* from his grasp, but

not without receiving a wound, which irritated him so much, that, in the struggle that ensued, Sir Patrick received a mortal wound in the neck. The blood flowed so rapidly, that his last sigh was breathed as soon as his enemies were conscious of their victory.

His servants were permitted to bear his body to his own chamber, and then underwent a kind of examination. Schenk and Father Moriarty were detained on suspicion, (of which the latter alone was deserving,) and Schenk was, therefore, speedily liberated. Owing to the narrow observation Sir Patrick's conduct had for a long time undergone, and to the evidence Pinelli had collected, while in his feigned character so long a resident at Kiltarle, the Government were fully aware of Sir Patrick's offences, and those of his instruments.

Oonagh had quitted her chamber while the servants were under examination, which was the reason she had penetrated to her father's apartment without meeting any one. In the utter desolation that surrounded her, the only consolation she had was to know that Maurice had not voluntarily abandoned her. But then

she could not doubt he was in the hands of his enemies—that he was a prisoner, and in danger of losing life and fortune.

The horrible catastrophe of her father paralyzed and stupified her faculties. She sat for hours gazing vacantly on the familiar objects that had used to surround him in his chamber and library. She prayed hourly for his eternal happiness. She gazed on the pictures of Sir Patrick and her mother—his strong and graceful figure—the steel breastplate which he was represented as wearing—the strong sword he appeared to grasp—the view of Kiltarle in the background, and a scroll in the air, bearing his device, a star—the motto “*Surgente spero*,”—his proud and animated countenance! His armour had proved vain! there was now no hand to grasp the strong sword! There was no heir to bear that crest! The motto would no longer apply to earthly hopes, and Sir Patrick had thought but little on those hopes which were spiritual!

Hardly was her father consigned to the tomb, when it was necessary to announce to Oonagh that the castle and lands of Kiltarle were forfeit

to the crown, and she must prepare to quit the inheritance which was once to have belonged to her and to Maurice Bellew! All the estates which were to be her's in right of her father, were now the property of the Crown.

This was not, however, a denunciation of poverty; for the ample property of the Plunkets devolved to her in right of her maternal ancestors, and was so settled as not to be affected by her father's political errors.

Little as we are influenced by consideration for affluence in early youth, there was much to afflict Oonagh in parting with her place and people. It was distressing to hear the lamentations of the poor old tenants at losing "the family." She was told innumerable tales of the peculiar reasons each had to feel more attachment and regret than the rest. With the mixture of simplicity and art inherent in Irishmen, they enumerated the little favours they had hoped to receive from her hand, and besought her to obtain the promise of their objects from their future masters; and they remembered a thousand anecdotes of her parents and family that Miss Lynch would then gladly have forgotten.

She endeavoured to dwell on the consolation afforded by the knowledge of the wealth derived from her mother, which would still enable her to serve her old dependents; perhaps to buy back a part of the land that had been Sir Patrick's. These were the meditations suggested by the grief of her father's retainers; for the distracting anxiety she endured on Sir Maurice's situation, and the horrible end of her father, had dulled her feelings on every other subject.

As Moriarty and Schenk were detained for some time on suspicion, Oonagh for the first time in her life found herself compelled to decide for herself without seeking advice or encouragement from others. It added to her sadness; for women, ordained and accustomed to depend on others, have little satisfaction in the loneliness of independence, and there are few considerations more melancholy than the certainty that none are interested in your decision.

Sir Patrick's forfeiture was now pronounced: Kiltarle she was obliged to quit, yet to remain in Ireland till the affairs relative to her remain-

ing property were arranged ; and at all events she could not return to France ere she ascertained the fate of Bellew.

Oonagh resolved to remove to a convent at Tralee for this period of suspense. She departed with Joyce Malone. Blinded with tears, she endeavoured to catch a last view of the ancient house she was quitting for ever : she turned towards it, but her tears concealed its gray old walls from her view, and the loud lamentations and passionate ejaculations of her attendant, alone told her when that last glance was impossible.

The convent was poorly endowed, and consisted of twelve nuns and their prioress ; persons of less consideration than Miss Lynch, and who were greatly flattered by her seeking even a temporary retreat among them. Every thing consistent with their rule was done to make her residence agreeable to her ; and she retained a degree of liberty she would hardly have enjoyed in a French convent.

It was one day announced to her that one of the tenant's daughters had walked to Tralee for the sole purpose of seeing her. Oonagh

would gladly have refused ; every recollection of Kiltarle drew tears from her eyes ; but she felt that it would be ill-natured to refuse a small request to those whom she might never more have an opportunity of obliging. She agreed to see Catharine Cormick in the parlour.

Her visitant advanced with a timid step and wandering eye ; and when she approached Oonagh, said, in a low tone, “ Am I speaking to you, my lady, without any witness ? ” On receiving an assurance that such was the case, she presented a letter, saying, she had been desired to deliver it in secret to Miss Lynch’s hand only.

Oonagh could not doubt it was written by Maurice.

“ By the restless misery of the time that is past since we parted, I can guess, beloved Oonagh, what those heavy hours have been to you ;—but the deep calamity that has been added to your cup of sorrow, that you were called to bear *alone* !—oh, Oonagh ! it calls alike for tears and vengeance ! I may not yet ask you to restrain the first, but remember I weep with you—for your father and mine. This

sorrow, like every other, is common to us both ; but vengeance is my privilege.

“ A few moments, a few words only, I dare venture at this moment. I cannot leave this kingdom without seeing you ; obtain the Abbess’s leave to visit St. Agnes’ Well on Friday next. Leave your attendants at Cormick’s cottage ; and we shall meet again.”

Then Maurice was not changed !—he lived !—they would meet again ! And Oonagh, who had so often sworn to detach her heart from every earthly feeling, felt it suddenly and forcibly recalled to all the delusion, struggle, and anxiety she had so often and earnestly abjured. She had not lost his heart, though it had been won by a crime : like the rebellious Israelites, self-reproach and fear departed together.

St. Agnes’ Well was a chalybeate spring, to which the vulgar in that part of the country attached a superstitious virtue, and the better informed ascribed some medicinal value. Some persons who had, or imagined they had, profited by one of these qualities, had enclosed it beneath an arched stone cell ; and in a small house adjoining lived an old woman, who ob-

tained some assistance to her scanty livelihood by clearing the cell from the moss which would otherwise have covered a rude image of Saint Agnes that stood by the well, and from the withered leaves which seemed to seek a shelter from the capricious blast that bore them thither. For these services, and for pitchers of the water, which the peasants often carried to a great distance, the sanguine and the pious usually offered a small gratuity. No other being dwelt near.

The well was in a secluded and healthy spot, but a short distance from the bay, where the ground suddenly sinking, affords some shelter from the sea-breeze. Maurice had been induced to choose it as the place of appointment, not only from its solitude, but, from its visitors being of all varieties of station and appearance, should he be observed, he would be less likely to excite suspicion or enquiry than in any other place.

Oonagh obtained the Abbess's permission with ease. St. Agnes' Well was only two miles distant from the convent: she walked thither, accompanied by Joyce Malone, whom

she ordered to await her return at the cottage of the old woman, and proceeded alone to the well.

It was one of those dark, calm, autumn mornings, that shows like the displeasure of a friend : the unshaken gossamer, studded with the night-drops, spread over the furze-bushes ; a slight fog hid distant objects, but the air was warm and genial : Oonagh felt as if she stood on the threshold of a great sorrow, in spite of the expectation of seeing Maurice. A moment more, he stood by her side, and received a tearful and speechless welcome. The circumstances of his absence and silence were thus explained :—

On the morning he left Kenmare, he had no sooner passed that part of the road which led through the more populous district, than he met a small party of armed men, who first passed them, after asking some trivial questions, but speedily turned, and surrounded Sir Maurice and his servants, whom they arrested in the King's name. The attack was so sudden, the odds so unequal, that resistance would have been vain, if intended ; but Sir Maurice had

not the same reason as Sir Patrick to suppose his situation desperate: he conceived that submission was the more prudent course; and it was not till afterwards he found that he should not be allowed to communicate with his friends at Kiltarle, and that the Government seemed as perfectly well-informed respecting his political connexions as himself.

His offences were limited to having joined in some of those injudicious and ill-conducted schemes for raising troops for King James, and meeting in consultation on the subject with the partisans who contrived them, such as Sir John Friend, Mr. Charnock, and others, who afterwards forfeited their lives for their attempted service.

Sir Patrick Lynch had entered into less creditable plans of hostility, having more than once been called to discuss intended assassination.

Nothing at this period appears more surprising than some of the childish manifestations of enmity which are recorded as part of the testimony affecting the lives of certain Jacobites. The crime of one consisted in having drunk as

a toast among his political associates the allegorical sentiment, “*squeezing the Orange*.”

Maurice, young, brave, and romantic, loved to consider himself as bound to a Prince who possessed a divine indefeasible right to his services, his heart, and his blood. A zealous Catholic, King James appeared to him the champion of his religion, as well as his anointed master. While proceeding on his enforced journey, closely and constantly guarded, he received an intimation from one of the officers of justice, that, in consequence of an obligation he owed to the Bellew family, he would endeavour to facilitate his escape; and the farther information was added, that such evidence was in the hands of Government as would ensure conviction, if he awaited the result of his trial. He accepted the offer; and being in a chamber next the roof, several tiles were removed so secretly as to enable him to reach the outside of the house, and finally the street.

He who contrived his escape had earnestly conjured him, on no account to attempt returning to Kerry till the heat of the pursuit should relax, as his enemies would naturally

seek for him in that direction, his engagement with Oonagh being known. Maurice, in complying with this obviously necessary precaution, had written various letters to Oonagh and Sir Patrick ; but his friend had judged them likely to be intercepted : a circumstance so dangerous in its result to him and those who favoured his evasion, that he resolved to suppress them all. To this had Oonagh owed so many hours of anxiety, so great an addition to the sorrow for her father's untimely end !

Long did she bewail that hideous catastrophe with Maurice Bellew ; and so completely did he share her sorrow, that she did not once ask herself if his sympathy was owing to Herman Schenk's enchantments.

At last, the present, the future, and themselves came to be considered. He advised her immediately to retire to France. " Though the attainder that has just gone forth against the memory of your honoured father will deprive you, for the present, of the great wealth you were born to inherit from him, yet, dearest Oonagh, your mother's fortune you cannot for-

feit; so that I may be at ease about your actual situation when you are in France. A few months, nay, a shorter period, may place our rightful King on his throne: he will reverse the iniquitous sentence of the Prince of Orange, restore your fortune and mine. In France, beloved Oonagh, we shall meet again; and, I trust, the only separation we shall then ever know, is that time in which we shall crush the usurper. Delay not to leave this unhappy country—forget the sorrows you have known in it—forget every thing but me, and that we shall soon meet again!”

“We may meet, Maurice,” she replied; “we *may*—but we may not! Too certainly, a great struggle will soon take place: in the bloody days that may be appointed, even in victory, I may lose you—and what then will this dark world and King James’s success be to me? I feel an internal conviction, that for us all will end ill:—my father fell—and you!—oh, Maurice!”

“If I should,” replied Bellew, “you will remember that I did my duty; you will often

pray for my soul's pardon ; and when our master is again at Whitehall, you will say, though Maurice did not see the victory, he fought for it : joy will mingle with your sadness. See, how infectious is despondence ! I will not indulge your melancholy fancies any more. I shall not fall, believe me ! The very excess of our misfortune shows that it cannot endure—there always is a reaction in human affairs : the same distrust of the future which used to alloy the happy present, ought now to turn to hope, and impel you to believe that sorrow is equally unstable. Courage and conduct make our destiny.”

A short and passionate adieu, and Maurice had departed. After a few steps he checked his horse, and turned to look once more on Oonagh. She was still gazing on him ; and the expression of hope and affection in his countenance, as it often afterwards recurred to her mind, long served to console her heart. His clear and noble brow—who could raise the sword to deface it ? where was the adversary who could cope with a form of such strength

and grace? It seemed as if he would ever be
what he then was—

He, whose young and polished brow,
The wrinkling hand of sorrow spares ;
Whose cheeks bestrewed with roses know
No channel for the tide of tears.

CHAPTER IX.

OONAGH returned to the convent to weep, to pray, and to hope for better times. She grew every hour more anxious to return to France, and awaited with much impatience the arrangement of her affairs in Ireland.

The sisters of the convent, her present abode, were Irish gentlewomen. Most of them had entered it in early life, and known but little previously of society ; had received few advantages of education, and possessed no attraction as companions for one who, in her short acquaintance with the world, had seen only the graceful and superior class belonging to the court of Louis the Fourteenth. The loneliness of Kiltarle was equalled, and had only changed its nature, and for the worse, as those know

who in deep anxiety, or heavy affliction, are not allowed to dwell on those painful interests without interruption—not from kind and anxious friends, but from the indifferent, who force their attention to trifles, and disturb, without diverting, the heart “from its own bitterness.”

The petty jealousies, childish vexations, and trifling cares which consumed the time and filled the minds of these poor ladies, struck Miss Lynch with surprise; and rather desecrated her ideas of cloistral solitude, which had been derived from the convent where she had witnessed the ardent piety, and sincere abstraction from worldly feelings, that distinguished her aunt Theresa.

The first circumstance that broke the uniformity of her anxieties was a letter announcing the safe arrival of Maurice at Paris. It expressed the warmest affection, but the general tone was more sad, and less sanguine, than it had ever been before. He was now upon the spot, and saw all the exaggerated confidence with which the court of St. Germain's had misrepresented their expectations of support and success. He saw the innumerable claim-

ants depending on King James's bounty, and his struggle to help them all, which, in spite of the truly royal magnificence of Louis, was almost impossible. Every hour increased his difficulties, and the number of petitioners. At once a beggar and a king, perhaps no man had ever been placed in a position more fertile in embarrassment and mortification.

It is strange that James, whose errors, though great, were only those of opinion, (for none can question the sincerity of one who proved it by such signal sacrifices,) of all monarchs, seems to obtain the least sympathy from those who read the details of his history; while many more faulty characters are eulogized and bewailed. Yet he possessed many good qualities. Turenne rated his valour so high, as to observe, "If ever man was born without fear, it is the Duke of York;" and the most remarkable proof of the constant and effectual operation of his religious belief was, that his naturally harsh and severe disposition became entirely changed, in the latter years of his life, to a mildness wholly unusual at an age, and in a situation, so much more likely to irritate and

embitter it. He sacrificed his all, (and the stake was not mean,) to bring his people to the faith he considered necessary to salvation: if he failed, we may blame his judgment, but we must respect his intention,—a homage due to all, whatever their conduct may be, who are not guided in it by any selfish consideration, or hope of personal advantage.

While the lute, the poetry, the grace and loveliness of the beauteous Mary of Scotland, are accepted as claims for forgiveness for her violent and changeful passions, thirst of vengeance, and entire absence of principle, even by those generations who never could hear her gracious greeting, and on whom her matchless face has only faintly smiled in fading canvass; the harsh reserve, unbending determination, and ungraceful coldness of James the Second, has failed to obtain a pardon for his licentious youth, his bigoted maturity, and even for his devoted and truly religious age. Perhaps there never were produced two more striking examples of the impression derived from personal qualities, having so long survived their possessors!

Maurice had hitherto lived among those whose zeal was prompted by abstract belief in indefeasible right, or those whose interest led them fiercely to profess and defend it. His youthful and romantic heart confounded the cause and the leader: he gloried in his disinterested devotion to each. For the first time he heard in France that species of ridicule and contempt, both which led, a century later, to a more bloody catastrophe in that country. For the first time he had an opportunity of observing how blind King James and his partisans were to the realities of their situation, and what were the sufferings of penury in those whose early habits of careless luxury had unfitted them to bear it, or to occupy themselves in the vulgar and humble cares for the morrow, which are so heavy a tax on to-day. While the pride of some revolted at living on Louis's charity dealt by James's hand, the avidity of others murmured at the narrow portion allotted them; and the affectionate hearts of his true servants were wrung by finding themselves a useless burthen, adding to the embarrassments of him they would have died to serve!

Various as these feelings were, they produced gloom, sadness, and discontent in all. That rapid, unconscious calculation of the chances of human destiny, so common to those who reflect much and hope little, which men have agreed to call "presentiment," foretold a disastrous close to their present efforts and future hopes. The free wild breeze which swept the noble terrace of St. Germain's, and the far-stretching forest of Laye, seemed the "Protestant wind" forbidding them again to breathe English air.

From these contemplations Bellew anxiously turned to the hopes he founded on the valour of his master's adherents, and the generous assistance of Louis, in whose hands he could not then guess James was a tool: an *expensive* tool it is true, but no more, to the royal *friend*, who excited him to the most violent and self-prejudicial measures, at the same moment that he pensioned his minister, (Lord Sunderland,) and employed Barillon, his own ambassador, to distribute money among the English mal-contents, while claiming from the world the character of a benefactor, and from the victim of this signal

treachery the confidence of a friend and the submission of a dependent. But the baser dregs of human motives are longest in developing themselves; and distrust of Louis's sincerity did not then occur to any of James's adherents.

Maurice, however, throughout his letter, in spite of his wish to write encouragingly, created a contrary impression. He urged Oonagh to sell her mother's property and hasten to France; he loved too sincerely, and was too confident of her entire affection, to feel a cold scruple at availing himself of the fortune being now entirely on her side; it was ample, though now only consisting of what her father's attainder could not deprive her, by the estate possessed in right of her mother.

Oonagh was cheered and enchanted at his letter; in spite of the jealous vigilance with which she examined every sentence, she could not find one word that could inflict distrust and depression by its coldness or ambiguity. He had written to her as she would have written in his situation, which rarely occurs in correspondence between a man and woman who love

each other; they are apt not to make allowance for the different modes of feeling, and still more for the difference in its expression, that education, habit, and sex, have caused.

“ Yes,” said Miss Lynch, as she laid down the letter, “ whatever my fault has been in obtaining the spell, it has proved effectual; and what would I not give, that I had fairly and really won the noble heart I hold by a base stratagem !”

According to the advice given by her lover, she applied to her agent to forward the sale of her lands, and tranquilly awaited the completion of this arrangement.

At this period she received notice that one of her father's retainers had applied to the Abbess for permission to wait upon her; and being asked whether she wished to admit him, she enquired his name, and learned it was Herman Schenk. Though that name recalled some melancholy as well as some embarrassing remembrances, she did not wish to decline his visit, and signified to the superior that she desired his admittance.

Schenk appeared to value the permission

“ Even if circumstances had not compelled me to ask the honour of an interview,” he said, “ I could not have quitted this country without requesting leave to offer a respectful farewell to the daughter of my revered patron, to wish her all the happiness she deserves and bids fair to attain ; and above all, it is my duty as an honest man, to learn from her own lips whether I have justly and fairly fulfilled *my* part of a compact which she has so liberally rewarded. I could not enjoy the recompense of science in this instance without being satisfied—*most fully* satisfied, that it is not the zeal of my labour, but the triumph of its success, that you rewarded. I shall then freely and gratefully apply to my own benefit the earnings of my service, and forget the vigils and hazards its performance demanded. Forgive me then, madam, for an enquiry, that in other circumstances would justly be deemed a most unwarrantable impertinence ; suffer me to ask whether you are satisfied of Sir Maurice Bellew’s devoted attachment, and whether your union continues to be an event resolved on by both ?”

Oonagh signified that it was.

“It is well, madam,” replied Schenk; “I can then have no hesitation in availing myself of the instrument by which you assigned me the estate of Ard carrick, however I must regret that circumstances have made your bounty bear a more considerable proportion to your means than when it was bestowed on me.”

After a few more expressions of good-will and interest, Schenk departed, and Miss Lynch reflected, not without uneasiness, on the hasty gratitude with which she had originally alienated so large a share of her property. At the time she gave it, the ample estates of Sir Patrick had made it seem but a moderate remuneration for all she desired on earth. Little as she knew of her affairs, she was aware that Ard carrick included the greater proportion of her mother's portion, which was now to be her sole dependence. How was she to account to Maurice and the world for this singular liberality towards the German? and what would remain to them?

While still perplexed with conjectures, a few days after Schenk's visit, she received two let-

ters; one from her agent, containing a detailed account of her pecuniary affairs, and stating, that Mr. Herman Schenk, late agent in Sir Patrick's mining speculation, had put in a claim to the estate of Ard carrick, and produced an instrument, apparently signed and executed by herself, entitling him to the whole of that property.

The agent continued, that some doubts had been excited as to this paper being genuine, as Mr. Schenk had received a considerable stipend for his direction of the mines, from Sir Patrick; and the magnitude of the gift in question had rendered it suspicious. Miss Lynch would probably remember, that a few years back a *part* only of the tract called Ard carrick had belonged to the Lynch family in right of Miss Plunket; that her other estate, named Inchcalliach, had been exchanged for the remainder of it, with the approbation of all concerned, as it was considered most advantageous for her daughter so to do. In fact, therefore, Ard carrick now comprehended the whole nearly of what remained to Miss Lynch. The agent added, that the importance of the

transaction made him feel it a duty to ask her final orders, and to recommend mature consideration ere she ceded rights so valuable.

In spite of the respectful and cautious manner in which this address was expressed, it was easy for Oonagh to perceive, that the agent considered her conduct actuated by a folly almost amounting to madness.

She dreaded to open the other letter, which was from Lord Rostellan, as she had feared, and began with apologies for unsought interference, but expressed his hope that the friendship and connexion so long subsisting between her father and himself, the relation in which he stood to Sir Maurice Bellew, and the engagement between her and the latter, might all be urged as circumstances whereon he might found a claim to take the liberty of offering his advice ; particularly as persons of her age—above all, females—stood greatly in need of the assistance of older friends of the other sex, on occasions involving pecuniary transactions.

He proceeded to say, her agent had informed him of Schenk's claim, and the deed said to be her's, which assigned to him almost the

whole of her remaining fortune. He could not help suspecting that Schenk, of whose integrity he had ever entertained a mean opinion, had either forged the paper, or in some way most foully imposed upon her. "In any case," continued Lord Rostellan, "of what nature are the services which demand such a princely recompense? It were too much, if you were still the heiress of Kiltarle; but, in your present situation, madness could hardly account for your sacrifice, almost of the means of living, to the avarice of a man to whom you cannot owe any considerable obligation. He had, therefore, counselled her man of business to take no step till he again heard from Miss Lynch."

Oonagh was overwhelmed with consternation. She had voluntarily given the promise to Schenk, and, at the time, thought the recompense hardly adequate to the blessing purchased. He had fulfilled his part of the engagement; and the apparent fairness displayed in his endeavour to ascertain whether such was the case before he advanced his claim to the

reward, made her blush to entertain even a wish to revoke it. Yet how was she to plead his service, when she had promised never to divulge its nature? And if she did not, what opinion would Lord Rostellan, or even Maurice Bellew, form of her conduct?

A little reflection convinced her, that, whatever her suffering might be in consequence, it was her duty to keep the promise she had made. She therefore informed the agent, that it was true, she had, in consideration of Mr. Herman Schenk's great services, surrendered to him her right in the lands of Ardcarrick; that the change in her situation could not release her from the promise made ere it took place, however unfavourable to her interests the fulfilment might be. She concluded by requesting he would turn all that remained of her property into money, and remit it to a banker in Paris.

To Lord Rostellan she dwelt on the services of Schenk generally, and the sacredness of her promise; and, to diminish his surprise at her munificence, truly added, that when the do-

nation was made, she was not aware that Ardcarrick had now included both the Plunket estates.

After the interval of a few days, she received a visit from Lord Rostellan, who said he had, on receiving her reply, sought an interview with Schenk, and represented to him that it was probable that Miss Lynch was not aware of the importance of her gift. But the German showed him the deed, which had been prepared with the utmost care and accuracy, and all particulars respecting Ardcarrick specified in it. Still he was of opinion, it might, and ought to be disputed.

Oonagh was distressed to see that her refusal to do so, as well as the embarrassment she showed in avoiding to own why she had made a gift so considerable, made an impression in her disfavour on Lord Rostellan, who evidently regarded her with curiosity and distrust: and on her naming her intention of proceeding to Paris, he enquired if it was still her intention to fulfil the contract with his kinsman; she answered certainly. Lord Rostellan hinted that he should think it advisable to defer their marriage till

more settled times. Maurice was now utterly penniless, and dependent on the bounty of a master himself a dependent. The only hope the future held out was the chances of King William's overthrow ; till that event, (if ever it did take place,) Maurice would of course attend King James on every expedition ; his continual absence, and their mutual poverty, would make their married life one of the greatest privation and difficulty, and leave her exposed to a thousand mortifications. The course he hoped Miss Lynch would pursue was to return to the protection of her respectable aunt, and the safety of her convent, till their marriage could be arranged with better prospects. He was sure she would see this circumstance as he did ; and he would aid the representations she would doubtless make to Bellew, with all the earnestness and zeal of which he was capable.

He then took leave of her with an air of coldness and suspicion that pierced her heart, when she reflected that it was Maurice's nearest friend and relation from whom she thus parted : the same man who would have stood by at their

marriage ere this time, but for the misfortunes which had befallen them in the last few months. Even the slight family likeness; which in the cold and more aged countenance of Lord Rostellan recalled the bright looks of Sir Maurice, added to her sorrow; few things being more grievous than to meet unkindness and hostility in a voice or brow resembling that of the friend who would have died to serve and please us.

Oonagh soon afterwards retired to France. She left none she regretted individually, but she regretted everything collectively, by that strange law of custom which forms our local attachments. The ignorant but affectionate peasantry, for whose improvement and welfare she had with Maurice formed so many plans—the lordly halls which had so long been in her family, and where she should have dwelt with him—the tomb of her parents! A secret voice seemed to tell her heart that what she now quitted she should see no more; and the trivial peculiarities which marked the difference of the Irish soil from that of France, even the damp-laden wind and the vapour of the burning turf

as it was blown towards her from the cottages, received a sigh of adieu—though she went to Maurice Bellew.

Her earliest object at Paris was to join Madame de Montchanais, where she found Sir Maurice waiting her arrival. The great joy of meeting after so many dangers and so much sorrow, banished for some hours every other consideration ; they forgot the past, and thought not of the future. Oonagh was satisfied that Maurice loved her.

The next day Madame de Montchanais carried her to pay her respects at the Court of St. Germain's. Its aspect was not yet that of an exile's retreat : there was still the reflected splendour of Versailles ; the hopes, the intrigues of former rivalries, to animate and distract the inhabitants ; the grace and dignity of Mary of Modena, and the prejudice which hallowed the cause and person of its melancholy master.

Oonagh was received with kindness and distinction, as the daughter of an efficient and distinguished partisan. The Queen begged her to remember that though she had lost a father, she

had found a mother, who wished to retain that title till she was consigned to the protection of a husband. An apartment in the palace was allotted to her use, and it was understood she was to reside there till her marriage took place.

Two circumstances reconciled and even rendered this plan more agreeable to Oonagh than a return to her convent. As Maurice must necessarily remain with the King, she would more frequently have him with her; and the convent would have recalled the remembrance of the resolutions now given up, and perhaps a feeling of shame at having originally maintained with such pertinacity a purpose relinquished so eagerly.

Soon after her establishment at St. Germain's, the money her agent had promised to remit reached Paris; and her having ceded Ard-carrick to the German became known to Maurice Bellew.

He did not view it with the suspicion of Lord Rostellan; but he asked her if she did not think she had been too liberal? "My dear Oonagh, surely your generosity has led you too far. The services of Schenk in the capacity

for which he was employed were amply remunerated ; and in other points of view I have a slight opinion of his merit and character. He was an empiric. You remember the astrological nonsense he used to talk ; I am convinced if we had been simple enough to give him a hope of being believed, he would have pretended to possess the elixir vitæ, or philosopher's stone. Men who pretend to superhuman powers, must necessarily be impostors. Tell me why you gave a reward, so much too large for any service, to a man apparently undeserving of any ? Perhaps he has made you believe he was useful in concealing or in assisting our political negotiations ? believe me, he was not trusted in the *least* degree."

" Maurice," said Miss Lynch, " he did deserve reward—a high one ! I have solemnly promised never to divulge why it was given—do not, therefore, ask me : I cannot tell you ; and it is a deep sorrow to me to be compelled to keep one thought a mystery from you. It is what I hoped to have been impossible ; it will surely never again occur ; but I cannot help it. Have you sufficient confidence in me

to suffer this reserve? and will it not diminish, when you remember I have refused to tell you my secret?"—She spoke earnestly, with clasped hands and tearful eyes.

Bellew replied, "No, Oonagh; I see it is with unwillingness you withhold your confidence. But you have silenced me; I will not press to know what you have promised to conceal; though perhaps I may still," added he, smiling, "doubt the prudence and propriety of making the donation you have assigned to Schenk. And I fear you are the sufferer by some strange imposition; for why, otherwise, should concealment have been exacted, as necessary towards those most interested in you, and consequently most likely to wish all who served you faithfully rewarded? Think well, my dear Oonagh, whether this may not be the case: judge for yourself, since you may not confide in me. Such consideration is the more important, since by resigning your mother's fortune, however well the future may serve us, for the present you will be reduced to most narrow circumstances."

Oonagh wept bitterly: she was heart-struck by the generosity of Maurice in trusting to her, and by his ready submission to the necessity of her fulfilling an engagement so adverse to their mutual interests. She felt how few men would in such a case have refrained from insisting on an explanation. She longed to tell him all, but remembered her own solemn promise, and the fate her mother incurred by breaking her's. Nor was she without apprehension as to what Maurice's opinion might be of one who had won by an unlawful stratagem, the heart which no sympathy of natural and youthful affection had prompted to seek her's. Such knowledge might disgust the least fastidious, without any other cause; but in her case, the spell which had proved so efficacious might be dissolved by the fact being promulgated. Such she had often heard cited as the mysterious law of the art whose power she had so rashly sought. She forbore then to speak, and Maurice kindly endeavoured to soothe and console her; but both were influenced and restrained by her reserve: he saw that some of the representa-

tions intended to comfort increased her tears ; and she learned that he who receives only half-confidence, unconsciously feels half-injured.

In intimate friendship, if you cannot say all, it is better to be wholly silent on the subject : in that case the pain remains with him who refuses himself the pleasure of confidence ; but partial communication makes it common to him who feels he is only considered deserving to be half trusted.

CHAPTER X.

IN spite of the unfavourable aspect of their fortune, Maurice urged Oonagh to marry immediately. The privations of poverty, he pleaded, were lighter, if endured together; and the protection of a husband would secure her from a thousand mortifications to which, in her unconnected situation, she would be exposed. Oonagh as anxiously looked to the time she should become his wife, as if no evil could occur after that event took place.

They discussed various schemes for their after-life, in conformity with their narrow resources, and there was this difference in their mode of viewing their situation; Oonagh talked as if there never could, or need be, a change in their now scanty fortune, and as if France

was evermore to be their country ; while Maurice always spoke with reference to a future triumphant return to England, and the restoration of his wealth and honours—both faithful to the law which confines the woman's heart to few objects and a narrow circle, while that of man stretches to include all that this world offers to tempt him !

It was agreed between them that he should inform the King of their intention, who would, perhaps, choose to honour the marriage with his presence, as a substitute for the father who had died in his service and for his cause ; but Oonagh rather wished to avoid such a testimony of favour—the mourning for Sir Patrick had not yet expired, and she considered it more respectful to his memory to observe the strictest privacy.

Again the object of her whole heart was near attainment ; Maurice would be her husband !—not now, indeed, in pomp and pride, given by her father's hand, but in exile and mourning ! Were the sorrows that had befallen her since the day formerly appointed for their marriage the castigation for the unlaw-

ful assistance she had accepted from Schenk ? Might she rely on the chequered happiness that still offered itself ? Surely she had paid a heavy tribute in the loss of her kind father, — still, to have won Maurice, was too much for one who had sinned so deeply. Of exile and poverty she endeavoured to swell the evils far beyond their real intensity in her estimate, that she might diminish the incredible degree of her good fortune. She was not sufficiently worldly to have lost sight of the fact, that poverty is not an evil, unless aggravated to *want* ; and those who possess the necessaries of a life to be spent with those they love, are not entitled to make a very high demand on the compassion of their fellow-creatures because they have not the means of procuring luxuries ; and banishment loses its meaning, when the exile is accompanied by those whose presence would make any land a home.

She tried to think she had done nothing to forfeit her right to enjoy her destiny without the pangs of self-reproach diminishing the value of its blessings. She recalled all the arguments advanced by the German to induce

her to purchase his assistance. In the bright morning light, when the spirits rise with the hope of a beginning day, as in beginning life, all those arguments seemed just and forcible.

“All animals,” he used to say, “man excepted, are allotted sufficient intelligence for their preservation, and the employments Nature assigned them: yet they are not accountable for the use of those faculties, or punishable for their misuse. Man’s portion of intelligence is not enough, even in civilized life, to preserve him from physical, far less from moral danger; and nearly one-third of life must have elapsed before his faculties have reached perfection: yet his errors are punishable! Something there is wanting for his guidance, which it is necessary he should acquire; it is, therefore, not only justifiable to seek, but an imperative duty to avail ourselves of every means of improving the imperfect light afforded us; and what science, magic excepted, offers to repair the defect of nature?”

In the murmur of busy day, Oonagh admitted the truth of all he advanced; but in the stillness of evening, in her solitary chamber, she felt a

deep consciousness of her fault, and a dread of punishment. As she gazed on the depths of the forest of Laye, the dark trees seemed to bend and wave their heads in token of disapprobation and menace; the birds, as they turned their flight to their roosting-place, seemed to shriek in reproach.

Oonagh was unusually depressed on the evening of that day in which she expected Sir Maurice to arrive for the purpose of making their intended marriage known to the King. The morning had been one of joyful perturbation; but when the hours of attendance on the Queen had passed, (who that day received a visit from some of the royal family of France,) Oonagh retired fatigued and saddened to her chamber.

The Court of France, which thirty years before had been so gay, so luxurious, so vicious, was now clouded by the mournful presages that the flight of time and the sting of remorse shot through the heart of its proud and flattered master. The shrewd cold favourite, at once mistress and confessor, wife and minister, who ruled in left-handed splendour,

could not hide from Louis the fearful truth, “that the night was coming in which no man can work ;” that soon, very soon, the glorious chambers of Versailles must be exchanged for the vaults of St. Denys. Perhaps she did not grieve that he who had ever been so much swayed by women, should by conscience be interdicted from all influence but hers — that he should contemplate the tomb too distinctly to have his attention withdrawn to other objects inimical to her supremacy.

The gloom and constraint of the royal interior was reflected by the society surrounding it, and added to the sadness of that gathered round the banished King of England. James spent his hours in contemplation of the heavenly kingdom to be won, and in consultation on attempts to regain the earthly kingdom he had lost,—occasional hunting-parties with his diminishing and discontented retinue, and formal reception of his magnificent and royal friend. His reserved and phlegmatic manners did not seek or gain the sympathy of the beholders, which was rather given to the tearful eyes

and gracious demeanour of Mary of Modena, the childish elegance of his son James Francis, and the long prejudice of the English people.

The orderly sadness of such a court contributed to cherish Oonagh's depression; for all who have lived much in what is called the world, must have felt that sorrow has need of repose and privacy,—and few efforts cost it more, and cheer it less, than that of mingling with indifferent acquaintance in formal society.

“ Oonagh !” said Maurice, “ you would hardly suppose that my ride from Paris to-day was the longest I ever took on that road.”

“ Indeed ! and why ?”

“ Because there was an execution. A wretched woman was the victim ; and the people were collected in such numbers to witness her passage to the scaffold, that all the streets through which my way led were completely blocked up by the pressure of the crowd.”

“ Poor creature ! Was there anything unusual in the case ?” said Oonagh.

“ It was an odd circumstance. She had, it seems, loved one who did not requite her at-

tachment. She was so credulous as to seek supernatural help: she obtained a potion from a pretended magician."

"What happened?" said Oonagh, faintly.

"He was poisoned!" said Sir Maurice. "His life was saved by prompt assistance; but either doubting the intention with which she gave it, or disgusted by the means she used to gain his heart, he accused her of sorcery, and an attempt to murder."

As he spoke the blood curdled round Oonagh's heart: the terms he used had never presented themselves to her mind, and the chance of what might have been the consequence to Maurice rendered her speechless.

He paused, and Oonagh was agitated by a wish to confess all to him, but she could not utter, and gradually sank on the ground. Maurice raised her, reproaching himself for having shocked her by a relation which he did not doubt was the cause of her violent emotion. After she recovered, he took pains, by immediately speaking on other subjects, to prevent her dwelling on the circumstance; and the enthusiasm which gave her strength for self-ac-

cusation, gradually sank into the fear of losing what she had forfeited her own self-esteem to gain.—Maurice informed her that the King was to grant him a private audience on the following morning, just before mass; and on his return, he hoped Oonagh would fix the day of their marriage.

When he quitted her, Oonagh again told Joyce Malone that her marriage was in question, and timidly selected the ornaments in which she had once already decked herself in vain.

In the morning she repaired to the door of the Queen's dressing-room, to attend during mass with the other ladies in waiting. Oonagh placed herself with them a little behind her Majesty. A gallery on the right side admitted the King, who entered soon after, attended by several gentlemen,—among the rest by Bellew. Oonagh fancied that there was an air of pre-occupation in the King, and that Maurice looked less cheerful than when they parted; and the next minute accused her fancy of being too ready “to cast the fashion of uncertain vils;” and was the more ready to do so, as she

fancied at other moments that all the gentlemen were occupied and anxious on something which interested all alike. As this could not be her affairs, she smiled at her own presumption.

When mass was over, they quitted the chapel, and attended the Queen to her drawing-room, who then retired into her chamber, leaving her attendants. Euphemia Douglas, the other maid of honour, immediately accosted Oonagh. "I am sure, my dear, there is something going forward which we are not to be told,—some great affair. What can it be?—A battle somewhere—a ball somewhere—some new conspiracy—a pilgrimage to Rome? What do you think? I hope the Prince of Orange is dead, and we are going back to England. Heavens! how glad I shall be to leave St. Germain's."

Miss Douglas would perhaps have hazarded farther conjecture, being a most voluble young person, but at this moment Sir Maurice entered, and Oonagh, when he was present, had long lost the faculty of seeing any other object, or hearing any other voice distinctly. He asked leave to go to her apartment to tell the result

of his morning's audience; she instantly complied. His manner alarmed her; if the King had approved, why was he so serious? and why did he not at once tell her what had passed? Could any circumstance on earth have again obliged them to postpone the marriage? It was impossible; both were free to act as they pleased. In consulting, or rather in apprising the King, they merely complied with a complimentary form—offered but a mark of deference and acknowledgment—he could have no objection, were it otherwise. But Oonagh's heart beat rapidly; she feared some unknown evil.

When they reached her apartment, Maurice said, with a grave smile and some effort, "Oonagh, you are so apt to foresee mischance, that you already anticipate my information perhaps. The King this afternoon proceeds to Ireland, and has commanded my attendance; in an hour I must leave you. If anything could console me for the hope deferred, it is that my speedy return is certain, and that there seems no doubt whatever of the instant submission of Ireland. I feel that I owe this sacrifice to my anointed master—may

all who serve him forget their own happiness and interests on this occasion—this final effort ! Final it will be, whether we gain or lose ! Oonagh, this is a great act of devotion ! but he asked it—said he depended on my services—required my attendance ; he *depended* on me, and must not be disappointed. At whatever cost, I must leave you. Will you promise to wait my return here at St. Germain's ? without sadness, and without apprehension ?”

Oonagh saw the great struggle Sir Maurice must have passed ere he resolved to leave her ; she did not wish to make the sacrifice more painful by expressing regrets that were unavailing, and fears that might sadden though they could not discourage. One hour's resolution, she told her heart, was a duty that must be fulfilled on her part, and Bellew had set her the example : she acquiesced with alacrity, if not with cheerfulness, to sustain the hurried farewell.

It was not till the last horses of King James's train had borne their riders out of sight, that a low voice seemed to repeat, “ You have parted voluntarily now, and you will

meet no more ; you have postponed your marriage now, and destiny will drive it off for ever !” The menace seemed repeated as she ascended the stairs to her chamber, where Joyce Malone had displayed all the garments and jewels likely to be worn at the marriage, and was then waiting to learn which would be selected. Oonagh sickened at objects that forced on her recollection all she had suffered the last day she had worn them. She almost resolved not to wear them, if she was happy enough again to see a day on which she should expect to become the wife of Bellew.

For some weeks all was deep and painful anxiety at St. Germain’s,—anxiety augmented by the mystery in which the expedition was involved, and the endeavour to appear cheerful and disengaged when fate weighed the chance of life and fortune. The news from Ireland was encouraging : the King’s reception had been as favourable as he could have anticipated ; the clergy and people of Dublin showed a zeal and affection which it was natural to mistake for the manifestation of the general feeling. Soon after, it was known

that the siege of Londonderry was proceeding with vigour, and the sufferings of its inhabitants afforded a fair presumption that their resistance would not be of long continuance. Maurice wrote in the highest spirits, full of confidence in their ultimate success, and speculating already on his speedy return. Oonagh's heart expanded with hope; she saw every eye around her beaming with triumphant confidence.

Among the French nobility who frequently paid their respects to the Queen of England was M. de Rosambeau: he was handsome in person, remarkably distinguished and graceful in manner, and possessed a large fortune. He had been acquainted with Oonagh during her first visit to Paris. Without being particularly intimate with Bellew, he lived much in the same society, and the general supposition that Sir Patrick intended to give his daughter to his kinsman, was guessed by most persons belonging to it. If M. de Rosambeau beheld Oonagh with any warmer approval than all who saw her were accustomed to bestow, could not be known; perhaps the idea of her pre-

engagement precluded the manifestation of such a sentiment, or no person belonging to the family was interested in its detection. Oonagh's whole attention was turned on Maurice, while he, as yet indifferent, did not observe whose was turned on her.

Since their return to France, with the intuitive perception which enables man to penetrate the heart of his rival, Bellew had become aware that M. de Rosambeau admired Oonagh. Though no external mark of preference had escaped him, his respectful, friendly manner, and agreeable conversation, made her talk more willingly with him than any other young man in her usual society ; and her engagement with Maurice being known, gave her the independent manner of a young woman already married, who knows her good-humour, while she conducts herself with discretion, cannot be misconstrued into encouragement.

M. de Rosambeau's visits to the court at St. Germain's increased in frequency. He talked *equally* to the ladies attendant on the Queen, but he talked *much* to them. To Oonagh he was merely an agreeable agent in the society ;

to Euphemia Douglas he was rather more. She was idle, unoccupied, and coquettish. Females to whom these adjectives apply, are apt to scrutinize minutely, and prize highly, the attentions paid them by the other sex ; and as M. de Rosambeau talked more to her than is usually done in mixed society, she began to consider what might be his motive.

“ It is true,” she thought, “ he makes no distinction between Oonagh Lynch and myself, but she is almost married, and he knows that she is often pre-occupied and sad. I am always attentive to what is passing, willing to amuse and be amused. As to beauty,—without vanity, to those who admire *fair* beauty, I am the handsomest. Oonagh is pale in general, and very few in this country have that bright changing bloom — that ‘ northern light,’ as M. de Rosambeau called it—which belongs to me. That sort of jet-black hair, though it is very pretty, certainly gives a melancholy look. Now these bright golden ringlets”—and she twisted and untwisted them with her fingers, as she thoughtfully stood by a narrow mirror in a japan frame, in the Queen’s waiting-room, which

often afforded a welcome pastime to her attendants, — “ now these bright ringlets are like a golden frame to a sweet picture — like the late withering leaves of autumn, curling round the Catharine pear. Yes, *my* kind of beauty is very uncommon here, and must please foreigners more than — Ah, M. de Rosambeau — this is very early to have the pleasure of seeing you !”

“ Not too early,” said he gaily, “ to join you in a very agreeable contemplation ;” and he glanced from her own face to its reflection in the mirror.

“ That might be meant for a compliment,” replied Euphemia, “ were it not doubtful whether you came to contemplate yourself or me.”

“ You have never yet met with such an instance of bad taste in any of your beholders, I am sure,” said he ; “ and if my visit is too early, you must accuse his Majesty of my indiscretion, whose commands I received to announce his intention of congratulating the Queen of England in person on the agreeable accounts from Ireland.”

M. de Rosambeau lingered during the whole of that morning at St. Germain's; and when the royal visitors had departed, and the Queen had retired to her private apartment, he obtained leave to accompany her ladies in a walk they were preparing to take. As they descended the long green slope, where a few scattered cottages were the only buildings to be seen, their attention was arrested by the sound of a young, clear voice singing. Though only snatches of the melody reached them as yet, Euphemia exclaimed, "That is a Scotch air, I am sure."

"Why do you think so?" said Lady Jane Drummond, who was the chaperon of the party.

"I might say," said Euphemia, "that was known to me by a kind of patriotic divination, which brought with the first distinct sounds a delightful perfume of peat-reek, and oatmeal, and broom-flowers, commingled; but not to make you jealous of my acuteness, I guessed it by the closing notes, of what appeared a verse, being so high,—and that is generally the case in our songs. But do let us go and listen to the singer."

They advanced gently, and saw, with her

back to them, a young woman sitting on a low stool, with a baby in her arms, whom she was trying to lull asleep, while two little girls, of six and eight years old apparently, were spreading clothes to dry, under her direction, and she sang the following ballad :—

She will not drink the blood-red wine,
That sparkles bright and high ;
She sits her down to wail and pine,
The salt-tear in her eye.
Will ye not drink the wine of France,
Nor yet the wine of Spain ?
Oh, better I love the wan water
I ne'er must drink again !

The peach like fair maid's cheek is found ;
Our southern fruit is fair ;
And ye may seek all Scotland round,
Nor find such fruit grow there.
I better love the bramble grey,
The blaeberry is good—
For these are fruits of Scottish brae,
And they grow in our gay green wood.

Will ye not sleep in golden bed ;
The curtains are of silk,
Of broid'ry is the coverlet,
The sheets are white as milk ?
Oh, the heather is a better bed,
Where the north wind's blowing free ;
And I long to lay my weary head
On the swaird of my own countrie.

“An ominous song for exiles to hear!” said Oonagh.

“I knew it was a Scotch tune,” cried Euphemia.

“It has a thousand times been observed,” said M. de Rosambeau, after a pause, “what unlooked-for associations our memory attaches to objects apparently the least likely to recall them; things in themselves insignificant or disagreeable, sometimes make such a different impression, by reminding us of the places where, or the persons with whom we first saw them! This observation, Miss Lynch, particularly recurred to me the other day, on meeting in the streets of Paris a remarkably strange and ill-looking person. I did not at the moment recollect where I had seen him before, but he recalled directly to my mind a very pleasant period—that in which I first had the honour of being acquainted with you.”

“And why,” said Oonagh, smiling, “did this ill-looking person remind you of me?”

“I remembered meeting him constantly at your house just before you quitted Paris—a German—I cannot think of his name?”

“What !” said Oonagh ; “could it be M. Schenk ?”

“Exactly,” replied Rosambeau ; “that was his name.”

Oonagh was silent for some moments ; she never heard Schenk’s name without some trepidation.

Euphemia had not been able to resist the curiosity she felt to learn who her compatriot was that had sung the ballad, and now returned full of sympathy towards the singer, who proved to be Mrs. Grant, the wife of an officer then serving in Ireland. His family were reduced to the last degree of poverty : besides the three children they had seen, the mother daily expected to add another member to this unfortunate family. She inhabited a mean cottage in the neighbourhood of St. Germain’s ; partly from the hope of having earlier intelligence of the Irish expedition, and partly to obtain an opportunity of entreating the assistance of the Queen.

The two young ladies did not choose to undertake to forward her petition, well knowing how much the Queen suffered from the num-

ber of claimants on supplies far inadequate to satisfy them ; but they promised themselves the pleasure of offering every kindness in their own power to Mrs. Grant, and returned to the palace arranging many plans for that purpose.

When Oonagh was again alone, she thought on the circumstance of Schenk's arrival in Paris, and could not help dwelling on the possibility of obtaining his consent to own to Bellew the stratagem to which she had recourse in order to gain his heart : she should then be satisfied. If his affection should survive the disclosure, she should be at ease ; she should then think she had a right to possess it—as given, not stolen : she should be free from doubt and self-reproach for ever. Schenk might, perhaps, hesitate to make the admission ; but if she convinced him that her object was not to deprive him of the price of the service he had rendered, why should he refuse ?

She pictured to herself the happiness of the time when she should not have one thought she need conceal from Bellew—the repose of entire confidence ! It would seem as if a wall

of separation would be thrown down between them.

A thousand expedients for obtaining an interview with Schenk passed through her mind. She might obtain leave to accompany Lady Jane Drummond, when she occasionally went to Paris to visit her young daughter, who was a *pensionnaire* in a convent there; and to M. de Rosambeau she might have recourse to find out Schenk's present residence. The possession of Ardcarrick (which she heard he had sold immediately on obtaining it) must have rendered him affluent enough to rise from the obscurity of his previous life—to appear an individual of wealth and consequence; his abode, therefore, would not be difficult to discover. Her meditations were full of hope.

In pursuance of her plan, she entreated M. de Rosambeau to discover the dwelling of Schenk—which with great difficulty he effected; and Oonagh, having engaged Lady Jane Drummond to take her to Paris the first time the latter should visit her daughter, addressed a note to the German, requesting leave to visit

him on a certain day, if his occupations would prevent him from coming to St. Germain's. To this request she received a reply, declining to wait on her, from the importance of engagements that usurped his whole attention, but consenting to receive her on a certain day, if she could come alone.

CHAPTER XI.

ON a summer evening as gloomy as a summer evening can be in the light hilarious climate of Paris, for an impending thunder-storm had covered the sky with black clouds and filled the air with oppression, two females, plainly dressed, paused in a long walk at the door of a church. One was young and most lovely, but her features expressed doubt, fatigue, and anxiety; the other was plain, middle-aged, or rather elderly, and appeared embarrassed and discontented.

“Is this the Church of St. Etienne?” asked the younger.

“Yes indeed, madam, it’s that same,” replied the attendant.

“Then here, Joyce, we must part,” said

Oonagh ; “ you must stop at your friend’s, and I shall proceed alone.”

“ Proceed is it alone ? sure, Miss Oonagh, it is not yourself that ’s going alone in the street—in the evening—in Paris ?”

“ It is not what I like, Joyce, but I must do so on this occasion.”

“ Blessed martyrs ! I could not leave you to do so. What would Sir Maurice say ? what would your papa (glory to his soul !) say, if he saw you by yourself, and in this strange and dirty part of the town, walking this night ? Why, for all you know, such a place as this may be full of whigs, and Dutchmen, let alone pick-pockets and murderers ! Faith and troth, if the fighting in Ireland was over, it’s the Prince of Orange himself you might meet in this part of the town ! Why, my lady, your mother never walked ten yards in her life, unless it was in a flower-garden.”

“ Say nothing to discourage me, Joyce ; I must go to see a friend who can only see me alone. I have had difficulty in gaining this opportunity—I must use it. Wait for me at your friend’s, and take no notice of my absence, how-

ever long it may be ; nor even mention whom you expect, or you may do more harm than you can suppose."

" Well, Miss Oonagh," said Joyce, quelled by the determined manner of her mistress, " I say no more, but I wish you were safe back—and it's little I think of them that send young ladies spying and bothering themselves with politics about these dirty streets, instead of sending gentlemen, as they ought to do." The latter part of Joyce's observation was uttered in a low voice ; she feared to offend, though she wished to prove she had guessed Oonagh's real object in undertaking this unusual expedition.

Having shown the door of her friend's house to Oonagh, Joyce Malone retired into it with many lamenting and repining exclamations ; and Oonagh walked down the street, having taken the precaution of writing down her route on a card.

Before she came to the end of the street, she entered a narrow lane, where she found the house described by Rosambeau as the abode of Schenk. It was an old-fashioned building of rather dilapidated appearance, and did not at first sight

announce any very material improvement in his circumstances. Impatience soon rendered Oonagh's timid touch upon the bell more distinct and peremptory, but without producing any one to answer the summons. At length, perceiving the door, though closed, was not shut, after some minutes' pause she ventured to enter the hall ; and after enquiring who was there, and receiving no answer, gazed around, uncertain how to proceed.

The house, though old, was scrupulously clean, and the ancient furniture of the hall in the nicest order. The lane through which she had passed was a *cul-de-sac*, and terminated at this house, which was thereby detached from the surrounding streets: it seemed but little frequented ; long grass grew between the stones of the pavement, which were mossy, as if seldom trodden. On each side of the hall was an old oak door, under a stone arch ; and Oonagh saw that on the left hand was ajar. Finding she was still unheard, she approached, and beheld the interior of the apartment. It was a long low room, with high latticed windows, and panelled with oak : the ashes of an exhausted

fire were in the wide grate; a cushion for making lace was in the window, and a noisy blackbird in its cage hung above it; a cat lay in a basket near the fireplace, over which was a coarse picture of St. Francis de Sales: a table, and a few high-backed chairs, completed the furniture. On one of these sat a woman with her back to the door, her elbows resting on the table, and her head leaning on her hands: so still and silent she continued, that Oonagh could hardly suppose she was awake.

Could this chamber belong to Schenk? It was unlikely; its quiet tenant did not seem sufficiently mean in costume and appearance to be a servant: she had mistaken the house. Under this impression she twice inquired if Schenk lived there, before she obtained notice. The female, when conscious of her presence, admitted that it was his abode, but added that he was absent. Oonagh repeatedly enquired if it was certain that he was absent, and if so, at what time his return was expected: to which she received evasive and reluctant replies, accompanied by looks of suspicious scrutiny,

which inspired the idea that he was to be found, though denied to her.

“ I am here,” said she, “ by the appointment of Mr. Schenk. I have business of great importance with him, and I cannot go till I have seen him. I will wait, but I cannot go till I have spoken with him. As waiting may involve me in circumstances very embarrassing, even dangerous, I beseech you,” added she, clasping her hands, “ go to him immediately, and say that Miss Lynch, his former pupil, is waiting to see him.”

“ His pupil, madam ! I wish——But you are perhaps aware that Mr. Schenk is frequently engaged, and cannot be disturbed. His pursuits, you know——study requires——he forbade me to intrude on his retirement.

“ But if you tell him *I* am here, whom he promised to admit——”

Her companion seemed for a moment to waver ; made one step towards the door, but stopped, and said, “ No, I cannot ; his time is of too much importance to him and to me ;—forgive me madam, I dare not risk such a proceeding.”

Oonagh had too long and exclusively looked forward to this opportunity of obtaining the German's leave to confide in Maurice, to resign it easily. She pleaded with the urgency of those whose petitions come from the heart ; and the person to whom she addressed herself confessed that Schenk was there, and consented to give her reason for resisting his being interrupted. " To do so," she added, " I must tell you what in itself must be wholly uninteresting to you, and in fact only concerns myself ; but I will trust you : perhaps your motive for seeking Mr. Schenk may be something analogous to that which obliges me to deny him.

" I am the widow of a physician, who left me in very scanty circumstances, about fifteen years since. This poverty would have been of little consequence to one who no longer needed for herself more than the humblest necessities requisite to human life ; but an object of hope and anxiety remained — my child, a boy of five years old, the most lovely and promising that ever was the joy of a mother's eye. Long before he could utter a distinct word, his countenance beamed with intelligence and beauty ;

passing strangers turned to remark his perfection, and congratulate me on the blessedness of being his mother. My home and my heart were enlightened by his bright blue eyes, and his sweet merry voice will dwell for ever in the ears of all who have heard it.

“ The poverty which made it difficult for me to give him the commonest advantages of education, enhanced the pleasure and pride I took in his improvement, which was greater than could have been believed. His affection for, and reliance on my care, gave me some of those extraordinary rare and happy moments which enable those who feel them to endure years of languor and privation without regretting they have lived. When he returned from school of an evening, his song was heard long before his step reached even his mother’s ear. My dark and silent room seemed to echo to the voice of angels, and to be filled with their brightness ; and I have gazed on his face till it seemed to resemble nothing earthly : ‘ Such,’ have I said to myself, ‘ are the glorified countenances of the just in heaven !—such were the last glances of the martyred Stephen !’

“ This house, which had belonged to my husband, being much too large, I used to let it to such occupants as this retired situation might suit. When Eugene was about seven years old, a rich engraver from Lyons became my tenant. He had come to Paris, to consult the physicians there relative to his wife’s health : she was perishing from the effect of a lingering disorder, which, he supposed, was imperfectly understood by the medical men of his native place ; and they brought with them their little girl, of five years old, named Natalia. The children became playmates. Eugene was solitary ; Natalia was saddened by the constraint of an invalid chamber, and glad to escape to a companion of her own age. I saw her with pleasure, for Eugene only could be more lovely and engaging.

“ Madame Marsan’s health did not improve ; but the doctors invited her to remain under their care, and amused her with hopes which even then were obviously visionary. Her husband established himself in Paris, in the hope of her recovery. She remained in my house till the close of her life, when Mr. Marsan re-

moved to the neighbourhood of his commercial engagements. He retained so kind a feeling to me, in consequence of his wife's gratitude for my attention, and so much good-will to Eugene for the fondness evinced towards him by Natalia, that he proposed to take him as an apprentice,—an offer joyfully accepted by me. My son, in this new art, as in every thing else, showed as much talent as attention : Mr. Marsan was every day more pleased with him : I looked forward with confidence to his attaining more than a competence. — These were blessed years !

“ My son was nineteen before he knew sorrow. Soon afterwards I began to observe that Eugene was less gay at times : he was occasionally silent and pre-occupied ; and when he caught my eye fixed on him, he began to sing and talk as usual. I taxed him with this change, which he denied ; but it is difficult to deceive the watcher who has but one object.

“ One day Eugene, in answer to something I said on this subject, taking hold of both my hands, said : ‘ Mother, you know I love you, and have never kept anything from you ; and

if I have not said what has sometimes made me thoughtful, it is that I have had unreasonable wishes. I have been always so happy—everybody has been so kind to me, that it is only lately that I have begun to see that some things will not be granted—must not be sought.’

“ ‘Oh ! my son,’ said I, ‘is there anything I can give you that I should refuse ? or any sacrifice I would not make, to obtain it for you ?’

“ ‘I know that, my dearest mother,’ he replied ; ‘but this is not in your power.’

“ ‘Tell me, at least, dear Eugene, what you *do* wish ; for your confidence will be a comfort, even if I cannot help you.’

“ ‘I will then, mother—I love Natalia ! I know now that Mr. Marsan is rich, and we are poor ; but I love her : she knows it, and she loves me.’

“ Though I might have foreseen this result of two such young persons living together constantly, I was deeply grieved at a circumstance so likely to injure my son with his master, and end in his disappointment, and that of Natalia, whom I loved as my child. I begged Eugene

to remember what was due to his kind master ; not to tempt Natalia to disobedience. He was too honourable not to submit, but his sorrow grieved my soul.

“ A few days afterwards I was surprised by a visit from Mr. Marsan. My heart smote me, as if I had been voluntarily deceiving him. He sat down. — Conceive my delight and surprise when I learned that he had discovered his daughter’s attachment, and had so high an opinion of Eugene’s industry and talents, that he contemplated his union with Natalia with the utmost satisfaction ! ‘ I should not,’ said he, ‘ have given her to any other in his circumstances ; but Eugene’s taste and talent are so eminent, he will one day succeed, and exceed me in my own profession.’

“ Soon after this, all was arranged for their marriage, which was appointed to take place when Mr. Marsan should take possession of a new and larger house, into which he was soon to transfer his establishment. On the day of Natalia’s saint, the family of Marsan and my son, with some of our neighbours, were to sup with me. We had all spent the preceding

evening at Marsan's, and a happier family surely had never met. On this evening Eugene was less gay than usual: his eye was heavy, his cheek flushed; he could not eat; and, spite of his evident efforts to seem like himself, he was silent and sad. Natalia looked anxiously in his face, and then at me. I was full of ill-boding. Often, when even a trifling ailment, or one existing in my own imagination only, had seemed to threaten him, had I trembled, and my eyes were dazzled with fear as I gazed on his. Often had I felt happiness unequalled when such alarms had proved vain: now, every hour seemed to confirm them. And though he jested at my first enquiries, when Mr. Marsan and his daughter were preparing to depart, Eugene also rose, but staggered, shivered, and sank back in his chair. He soon recovered in a degree, saying he had caught cold, he thought, and would not attend his friends home, but stay and be nursed by his mother; and declined Mr. Marsan's proposal to send a doctor. Natalia, however, sent one, who no sooner saw him than he admitted the complaint was severe fever. Eugene said all

he could to reassure me; but his complaint soon brought on continual delirium—he no longer knew his mother.

“ Who can describe that night of loneliness and terror? The joy of my eyes—the pride of my life, lay flushed and insensible before me. Low muttered ravings only passed his lips; and when he was still, the sound of the death-watch in the old wall only broke the silence, or the tongue of the old dust-cumbered clock struck those hours of which I might so soon see his last. How earnestly I prayed for strength and presence of mind and health of body to last out his illness!—I felt that all must cease when he was gone!—The bleak moment at break-of-day brought me no comfort; for the blue, cold light only showed more distinctly the ravages of the disease. The sun had not long risen, when a gentle knock announced Natalia, pale and anxious as myself. She waited on me like a daughter, and like a servant; spoke the encouragement she did not feel; and shared my cares and distress. When the doctor came, he announced that Eugene’s distemper was the most inveterate kind of small-pox, and prepared me

to see my worst fears fulfilled. Natalia never quitted me, but when her father used to force her to take rest. Every word she uttered—every instance of her attention proved the depth and sincerity of her affection for Eugene, and her kindness to me for his sake.

“Imagine the day when the physician, in words I still seem to hear, announced that my son would survive! For the first time I wept bitterly. Natalia sank on her knees, and embraced me.

“He did survive—he did recover; but that overwhelming happiness was allayed by finding that his sight would be the sacrifice of the horrible disorder! Eugene was blind! his eyes, once so bright, which had always looked to me with affection and gratitude, were now mute and wandering; and though he endeavoured to seem happy and calm—resigned to his fate, it was hardly possible to hide from Natalia and from me he used every effort for the purpose.

“Natalia showed more devoted affection than she had been willing to avow in former and happier times; she perpetually alluded to their future plans, referred to him for approba-

tion of them, spoke of and to me as her mother, and in all things tried to make Eugene forget that any unusual circumstance had happened. Mr. Marsan also showed the utmost anxiety during his illness, and the deepest sorrow for our misfortune; and neither the firmness of Eugene, nor the cheerful resignation of his daughter, seemed to restore his spirits.

“One morning our children had walked out, and Mr. Marsan came in: he appeared peculiarly gloomy and distressed, and sat silent and thoughtful for a long time; at length he said, ‘I flatter myself, my good friend, you have long been certain of my sincere regard for you and your son, and the grateful remembrance I must ever entertain of your attention to my poor wife. You will not, I am sure, misconstrue the feeling that compels me to communicate what I fear may grieve you. I must speak, and frankly: you are aware that I am in easy circumstances, but not rich, and that my daughter must reckon my business as the most valuable part of her inheritance. Eugene’s disposition, character, and talents, were so promising, that I willingly preferred him as my son-in-law to all others. I

could have sworn that he would have proved one of the most distinguished artists of his time, and have quickly made his fortune.

“‘I do not wish to afflict you, but that hope is over. I have been talking with his physician; there is no idea of his being able to pursue his profession. I must withdraw my promise—I could give my daughter to a poor man, but not to one who unhappily is incapable of engaging in any way of obtaining his livelihood. Consider their engagement at an end. I shall this night explain to my daughter my view of her altered situation; do you the same by your son; and to prevent the pain of family contention, of discussion, and entreaty, to which I am quite determined not to yield, tell him my resolution is unalterable, and let us be silent on the subject evermore. Another man might perhaps desire all intercourse between our families might cease, for a time at least; I shall only require that it may not be so frequent as heretofore, for I can depend upon Natalia’s obedience and veracity.’

“Every word uttered by Marsan was as the stab of a dagger to my heart. My Eugene, my

perfect, my lovely son, was then to be punished for having suffered one of the greatest misfortunes to which human nature is liable ! Though my voice was choked with sobs, I tried to plead his cause with Marsan, who attended for some minutes patiently, but then pressed my hand, and departed, saying, ‘ You distress me, but you do not change my determination ; nothing can do so ! ’

“ I was then to find the gentlest mode of communicating the grievous misfortune to Eugene. I trembled, my voice failed when my lips vainly severed to speak, though I had previously struggled for hours to conceal that I laboured under painful feelings. The first moment I took his hand, and had courage to call for his attention, he changed colour, and exclaimed, with some perturbation, ‘ Mother, dear mother, I feel—I know already what you are going to tell me. I knew it must come—I have foreseen, I have expected it—it could not happen otherwise.’ He grew pale, the hand I held was chill, and his eyes filled with tears—those beautiful blue eyes ! they could no longer see, but they could weep !

“I repeated the conversation I had had with Mr. Marsan, and if any thing could have added to my misery for our disappointment, and to my adoration of my son’s character, it was the depth of his affliction, and the pains he took to disguise it, and comfort me. I saw that he dreaded to hear that Natalia was forbidden to see him.

“Early the next morning she came, and it was hardly possible to recognise the bright, gay, and blooming girl who had left us the preceding day. Her eyes were swollen, and her cheeks deadly pale, but she was composed. She sat down by my son as usual, and said, ‘Eugene, our mother has told you my father’s determination. I must obey him; and I do so with more courage and willingness, as on that condition he has promised to allow me to come as usual. When I say I must obey, it is in giving up our marriage by his command; but though I may not be *your* wife, I never will belong to any other man. I have once been promised to you, and I will always continue your sister, your mother’s daughter, your constant companion. I have my duty to you as

well as to my father, and I will equally fulfil it :—I have told him so. Perhaps some day my father may relent.’

“ Several months passed, and Natalia omitted nothing of the affectionate kindness she had always shown ; her visits, however, were less frequent, for Marsan, though he ostensibly permitted her to come, was ever contriving that small circumstances should arise to prevent her visits. He expected a friend at home, whom she also must receive ; or he made an excursion, and took her with him ; or he was ill, and required her assistance. He also was perpetually urging her to marry another, and reflecting on her obstinate attachment. She heard him with mildness, and tried by every attention, and the most humble obedience, to make him excuse her fidelity to Eugene.

“ Every moment she could command, she spent with us. All the money at her disposal was devoted to supply him with many comforts, which the loss of the salary he had formerly been used to earn, had materially diminished. When I attempted to refuse her assistance, she wept, and reproached me for

having ceased to consider her as my child. Her greatest pleasure was to take the work I was doing for my son, and sit on a low stool by his side, singing to him, or telling him what she thought would amuse him.

“ Eugene was miserable: eager, active, and industrious, he was reduced to inaction, to depend for so much on others, to see poverty gradually approaching, and to feel that it was his duty to relinquish his claim on the heart and hand of his affectionate Natalia. One day I found him more cheerful. He had heard from one of our neighbours that an academy for the education of the blind had been established at Tours; that ingenious expedients had been adopted there for teaching reading, writing, music, and various trades, to persons wholly deprived of sight. ‘ Mother,’ said he, ‘ perhaps I might still be capable of earning a livelihood, of becoming useful, of obtaining M. Marsan’s permission to love Natalia! I know it will require time and much money, more than you can well spare, but it is worth this risk. If other men in my situation have conquered the difficulty of learning these arts, think what

my application will be ! I who have motives so powerful !

“ I readily agreed to his wish, and so did Natalia. With difficulty I raised money for his journey, and the expense of his tuition ; but even if he failed in his object, it was well worth while to give him hope and occupation for two years, and I saw him go with more resignation than I thought it possible I could have felt in parting with the child who had been my sole pleasure for so many years. I soon received letters dictated by my son, expressive of the comfort he felt in the revived hope of attaining independence, of making my age happy, and spending his life with Natalia.

“ Soon afterwards Mr. Schenk became the occupant of this house ; its isolated situation and spacious chambers made it particularly suited to one whose inclination and pursuits required privacy. Mr. Schenk mentioned that he delighted in chemistry, and I saw that a large detached chamber at the back of the house, he had filled with the instruments and vessels belonging to that art, the prosecution of which, and the study of books connected with

it, appeared to occupy his whole time; he could hardly spare a moment for his hasty and irregular meals. He never received any visit, and seemed always buried in reflection. I once happened to observe, when I saw him apparently exhausted with fatigue, that his health would give way from the severe and arduous application of his life, and that poor as I was, and at that moment more desirous of money than most persons, I would not lead his life for all he would ever gain by it.

“ ‘ That would not be an unreasonable decision,’ he replied, ‘ were the recompense I toil for moderate, or could I be satisfied with what were so. You may be content with your present resources, but if, for a particular purpose, you desired a certain sum ——?’

“ ‘ Nay,’ I replied, ‘ that is actually my situation at this moment. Money would procure the complete happiness of a child for whom I would sacrifice my life.’

“ ‘ Indeed!’ cried Schenk; ‘ I could perhaps assist you, but not without an effort on your part. Should you be willing to part with a small sum, to obtain as much as you require?’

“ ‘ Undoubtedly, if I were *sure* to obtain it ; but I should be unwilling to risk even a small sum where the issue was doubtful. I am too poor to do so.’

“ ‘ Can I be certain you will not betray me if I confide in you ?’ said he, stepping backward to gaze enquiringly in my face.

“ I promised, and he made me a communication which——But I know, madam, you guess its nature, and that I need not conceal it from you who have been his pupil ?”

A deep crimson suffused the cheeks of Oonagh. Could the German have confided to others the service he had rendered her ?

“ I see I am right,” resumed her companion, misled by her blush. “ In short, Mr. Schenk confided to me, that the great object of his life was to attain the art of transmuting metals, the composition of the *lapis philosophorum* ; that the great medicine had nearly reached perfection, but still some experiments were wanting to complete it. A very trifling sum, he thought, would now suffice, but his own means were exhausted ; and though thousands would gladly

contribute what was wanting, did they know the occasion, yet, to confide his prospects was to the last degree dangerous in a country where the occult sciences were considered sinful or illusory. Incredulity or imprudence in the recipients might cause disappointment and danger. To one who was trustworthy and prudent he would gladly commit his secret, and receive from them a small sum which would complete the work, and enable him to repay it forty-fold. He added, that from the good-will he felt to me, he should prefer conferring on me that benefit; and to show that he had the power he assumed, he desired me to witness the experiment on a small scale the next night but one, for which purpose he desired me to knock at the door of the laboratory at midnight.

“ It was not to be supposed that I spent the following day without perturbation. Sometimes I feared that Schenk was deceiving me. Could the master of so important a secret stand in need of the small sum he had asked me to furnish? Yet the motives he had alleged, seemed not unreasonable, and the offer to let me see the experiment was fair in appearance; I might

then grant or refuse my assistance, as appeared just and prudent. Should Schenk be successful, with how great pleasure I should recall my dear Eugene, and present to Marsan a sum that would remove all objections to the marriage of Natalia! I pictured to myself the joy, the unlooked-for joy, it would create. I beheld the countenances of my son, and of Natalia, and passed the day in a dream of doubt and joy. The next day I felt still more trust in my promised good fortune.

“The evening came, and I stopped at the door of the laboratory; Schenk bade me enter, and I beheld a clear charcoal fire in the wide grate, and many variously-constructed instruments and vessels, old books and earthen jars, scattered round. He brought a small jar of metal, into which he cast a variety of ingredients, after which he closed the jar in my presence, and placed it among the charcoal, with which he covered it, and heaped on more. Then leading me out of the room, he locked the door, and said, giving me the key, ‘To-morrow we will return here together to observe the result of my labours—till then, adieu.’ He quitted the

house, his sharp eyes full of triumphant confidence. He returned no more that night, which I spent in thinking of the moment when, if the German did not deceive me, I should reveal my secret to Eugene.

“The following evening Schenk summoned me to the laboratory. He opened the door, lighted a taper, and separating the ashes of the extinguished fire with an iron rod, he withdrew the jar. Having opened it, he presented it to me. At first, I only saw the blackness of ashes within, but he threw the contents on the ground, and at the bottom I beheld a small shining ingot ! He slowly raised it, and gave it to me : ‘ Give this,’ he exclaimed, ‘ to any jeweller or goldsmith in Paris, and tell him to assay it, and then we will talk further ; I must now resume my employments.’

“I carried the ingot to a respectable goldsmith, who declared it to be gold of singular purity. I apprised Schenk of the goldsmith’s decision.

“‘ You have then,’ said he, ‘ a fair proof of my skill and success as an alchemist. It is for you to say, whether you choose to avail

yourself of it, and by the sacrifice of a small sum at present ensure the possession of an ample fortune to the son you love so much. 'You saw me place in an empty vessel certain powders; you know I did not enter the laboratory till you accompanied me!' This was true; and I resolved to risk the savings of a frugal life on the chances of his art. The money I had destined for Eugene's support and tuition at Tours during the next year and a half, I deposited in his hands, and received the most encouraging promises and predictions.

"Oh how anxiously I told the days, the nights, the hours of the weeks which Schenk said must intervene before the completion of the 'great medicine!' The only consolation under my disquiet was the assiduity with which he devoted himself to the work, and his frequent assurances that all went on as we could wish. I often soothed my impatience with the imaginary picture of the meeting of Eugene and Natalia, when the happiness I had procured for them should be revealed.

"But the time wore on, and Schenk informed me he should require some further assistance

to procure a costly ingredient still wanting to the process. It was too late to question whether this might prove his last demand ; I had gone too far to retreat. Some small pieces of plate, some trinkets, the relics of our better times, quieted his demand, and restored my hopes ; but what were my agonies of self-reproach and despondence, when he again claimed an advance of money ! On this occasion I overwhelmed him with questions, complaints, and suspicions, till he at last grew angry ; observing, that he himself was so certain of success, that he had already spent in the same pursuit forty times the value of all I had furnished, and did not repine at the expense, so certain he felt of repayment in the completion of the great work. ‘ But,’ he added, ‘ be at peace ; this, I know, is the last demand, but it must be complied with, in order to ensure success ; another week will end this suspense.’ No other expedient remained for me than to pledge the lease of my house for the sum required, and to await the result in unspeakable anxiety. All I have in the world, all the fate of my dear Eugene, is yet uncertain ; but this day Schenk

entered my room of his own accord, (for I have ceased to follow him with enquiries,) and told me that this day would terminate the undertaking ; that this night he hoped to receive my thanks, and acknowledgment of the wrong my suspicion had done him. He desired he might not on any account be disturbed till he called me. Judge then, madam, whether I can comply with your request ? Is not my stake too high to run the risk of losing ?”

Oonagh had listened with amazement and distress to this strange tale, which, though it engaged her sympathy to the relater, left her in the most painful embarrassment as to what course she should pursue. Lady Jane Drummond had agreed to bring her to Paris for twenty-four hours: and though that lady was absent from her hotel, having gone to see her daughter at the convent; yet Oonagh, having gone forth with her attendant, would if her absence was prolonged till late, excite unpleasant and humiliating observation; and if she waited for Schenk's leisure, she might remain a great part, or all the night:—how could she account for such a strange proceed-

ing, even to Joyce Malone—much less to the family of Lady Jane? It might even reach St. Germain's, and the Queen might perhaps demand an explanation of conduct so unaccountable, which nothing but the real motive could excuse; to give it, would involve a confession, and infringe her promise to the German. Yet, of returning, her object unaccomplished, she could not bear to think—any thing seemed preferable.

Meantime the light was gradually diminishing, her companion relapsed into anxious contemplation, and a deep silence was between them. Madame St. Clercy started at times, and listened—half rose from her chair, and sank into it again with a sigh, seeming in her anxiety to forget the presence of Oonagh. The stillness was, while the light lasted, only broken by the bird as it hopped from perch to perch, and when the bright moon cast her reflection on the shining tiles which supplied the place of flooring, nothing but the distant whine of a dog reached that secluded chamber.

Oonagh began to consider whether she should not return to Lady Jane's; if she rose the next

morn by dawn, she might return to the house of Madame St. Clercy, and be back before Lady Jane should have arrived from the convent of her daughter. There was only the narrow *cul-de-sac*, and part of a street, between her and the church of St. Etienne ; on the nearest side was the door of the house where Joyce Malone was to wait her return. As the thought of traversing even that distance at so late an hour (for it was now completely night) impressed her with a terror for which she could hardly account, she resolved to propose that Madame St. Clercy should accompany her so far ; it would scarcely occupy a quarter of an hour to go and return, and in times of suspense and anxiety every exertion that makes no demand on the mind is a relief—the restlessness of the body is a slight and welcome distraction.

Oonagh was in the act of requesting this favour of her companion, when a strange interruption deprived her of the power of utterance, and Madame St. Clercy of attention. A sudden and violent explosion, like the discharge of cannon, took place ; the lamp on the table was extinguished and thrown down ; a number

of small panes of glass in the casements fell forth and shivered on the ground ; Madame St. Clercy and Oonagh, simultaneously rising from their chairs, also fell down.

After a few moments of stupor from the shock, Madame St. Clercy rose, and silently and with trembling hands rekindled the lamp ; and followed by Oonagh, hastily led the way to the laboratory. The great smoke which at first enveloped every object, rapidly dispersed, and disclosed the ground covered with fragments of the jars, crucibles, and other vessels belonging to the occupation of an alchemist, mingled with drugs and cinders, still glowing. In the midst of these lay the German, on his face, with extended arms ; his right hand firmly grasped the iron rod with which he had pointed out the ingot to Madame St. Clercy. He moved not. They raised him from the ground ; his open eyes still glared with their usual eager look, his thin lips retained their determined compression, but he moved not.

However fearful the events which befall women, however subject to shocking impressions their irritable frames and coward habits render

them, they seldom fail to retain self-possession while an opportunity of being useful remains—where their exertion may succour. She who shrieked at a noise, who trembled before an animal, or at the raised voice and angry gesture of a fellow-creature, can tend a death-bed with the activity of a servant, the apparent composure of a statue, and the forecast and helpfulness of a physician.

True to this feeling, Oonagh and her companion sought by every means they could devise to restore Schenk to animation, though without success. Madame St. Clercy at last spoke, and telling Oonagh that she would call in a physician, whose residence in the neighbourhood she knew, quitted the house, leaving Miss Lynch supporting the inanimate Schenk.

The breeze, as it entered through the casement shattered by the explosion, caused the lamp's light to waver; and its uncertain gleams gave at times an appearance of returning sense to the ghastly countenance she gazed on, which she sometimes hailed as an indication of reviving life, at others as the precursor of that struggle by which soul and body part.

Madame St. Clercy did not return ; the time of her absence seemed ages, and as the confusion of Oonagh's mind subsided, a sentiment of awe and horror increased : the chill and stiffness of death was evidently stealing over the corpse ; the keen expression faded with the relaxing muscles — his hand relaxed the iron rod — Schenk no longer existed !

When all hope of assisting him was over, Oonagh became touched with a superstitious dread. She feared—she guessed, how little the spirit which had fled was prepared to part with the earth which lay before her ; she thought with horror of his unlawful pursuits, of the use she had made of them, and the sin she had committed in buying his services. She saw that his crime had produced its own punishment ; — would her's escape ? He sought gold ! boundless riches ! — he had wasted what was attainable ; the means of enjoyment were gone, and the life wherein to enjoy them. And she had sought the heart and the hand of Maurice Bellew, — how had she gained the first ? how had she failed to gain the last ? True, by a spell — by a strange intoxication

he seemed to love her; but each time that she had thought to become his wife, how suddenly had circumstances arisen to thwart their union! She also was to gain nothing by her crime but disappointment! Perhaps to die like the man before her—a death without hope, without the rites of the church, the last cares of the priest!

She started and trembled; that vague fear of something strange and horrible, which is often the curse of childhood, made her heart beat thick, and the sound of coming feet rather alarmed than reassured her. It was Madame St. Clercy, followed by a priest and a physician.

The latter declared his services were needless, and after some questions they bore Schenk's body to the chamber he had been used to occupy, while Madame St. Clercy and Oonagh retired to the apartment in which they had spent the hours preceding the explosion. Though a natural and humane solicitude for the safety of the German, had wholly prevented the former from thinking of the consequences his death might produce, while she thought

it possible to save his life; now that all was over, she felt the ruin her credulity had brought upon her son, that son so beloved!—

“For him she lived in pain,
And measured back her steps to earth again.”

And now all was gone!—all that was to support him—the expense of his tuition!—the very roof that sheltered her was gone, through her fault—her credulity! She sat down in her chair, and clasping her hands above her head, repeated incessantly in a low and mournful tone, “Eugene, Eugene, Eugene!”

Oonagh felt all that long-repeated name expressed; she seized Madame St. Clercy’s hand, and said, “Be consoled, I entreat you; do not grieve; I have friends, I have resources, though I have not money; wait patiently but a few days—promise me you will! Wait one fortnight—do not write to your son—do not tell him of this catastrophe; if I do not redeem my promise, then do as you will, but give me this fortnight.”

“My dear young lady,” replied Madame St. Clercy mournfully, but touched and surprised at her eager sympathy, “I see you feel for our

misfortune, but your kindness blinds you to its extent: our pressure of want an individual in moderate circumstances may relieve, but it would not be in the power of many persons to afford assistance sufficient in its degree to repair our disaster—to make Marsan rescind his prohibition. No, our ruin is complete, and by my fault; but I sincerely thank you.”

“Only trust to me,” said Oonagh, “for one fortnight; suspend all uneasiness till that time is past; and allow me to ask you to accompany me to the church of St. Etienne.”

Madame St. Clercy complied, and Oonagh reached the door of the house where she had left Joyce Malone, without observation, and found her nurse in great disquiet, rocking herself at the open window by a lamp, which the break of day had now rendered superfluous. She hastened to open the door, and received Oonagh with blended reproach and thanksgiving; and having obtained a key which enabled them to return to their apartment at Lady Jane Drummond’s without observation, this painful and perilous adventure closed without further difficulty or embarrassment.

CHAPTER XII.

OONAGH returned to St. Germain's full of anxiety to interest some powerful friend in the distress of Madame St. Clercy. All the money that she could command she had applied to the service of Mrs. Grant. She knew that the Queen had hardly the means of assisting those who had real claims on her benevolence. She formed a resolution of trying to rouse the compassion of M. de Rosambeau, and told him the whole story, omitting only the circumstances which drew her to witness the catastrophe of the miserable Schenk.

Whether he was disposed to help Madame St. Clercy, she had not time to ascertain, for the Queen just then entered the apartment, and as every one arose to make their obeisance,

each eye was caught by the expression of her face, where it was easy to detect, in spite of a well-arranged smile, the traces of past tears and present uneasiness. After addressing a civil word and smile to every one present, she spoke for a few moments, on those subjects which at that time occupied the Parisian public, to Rosambeau; and then requesting Miss Douglas to bring a skreen she was working, she wished to have Lady Jane's advice upon it.

"It is for my large dressing-room at Whitehall," said she, as Euphemia raised the cover of the embroidery: "what other flower should be mixed with these roses?"

"Blossoms of *speed-well*, madam," said Lady Jane smiling.

"Then among them let there be my favourite flower, the white lily," said the Queen, also smiling slightly, and looking towards M. de Rosambeau and two other Frenchmen who were standing a little behind Miss Douglas. "By the by," added she carelessly, and looking at the embroidery, "my accounts from Ireland are not so good as usual; we have had a little

check ; General Kirke has relieved Londonderry, and we have raised the siege.”

According to the established rule in courts, the company received the news as it was given ; “ a little check ” — “ by the by,” taught them to treat the event as an unimportant circumstance. Some said it was better the siege should end thus, as many of his Majesty’s most faithful servants were in the town, and they would most likely have met with the severest treatment from the rebellious inhabitants who defended it. In short, the company seemed divided whether they should consider this unexpected termination of the siege a jest or a blessing. But it was only in the presence of the Queen that the best informed and most zealous of their partisans could so treat it ; — a general depression affected all who were not blind to the future.

Oonagh was in some measure disappointed, when she recalled the pains she had taken to interest M. de Rosambeau in the misfortunes of Madame St. Clercy, at the tranquil attention he had lent to the tale, without offering a single exclamation of pity, or expression of

sympathy, much less any indication of intention to befriend that unfortunate family. This indifference deprived her of all courage to urge what she had so much at heart.

The man who will not even listen, is a far less mortifying auditor in every case, than he who hears with attention all you speak with earnest feeling, and utters not a single word, even of dissent. He has cheated you into confidence, and left you without knowing what impression you have made; indeed under a tacit discouragement, for such reserve is often practised by those who disagree in opinion with you, but from prudence or politeness do not choose to avow it. This species of forbearance in youth generally indicates a character profoundly selfish, or one who in maturity will prove a consummate dissembler.

In youth we feel, what in age we think. Oonagh did not draw this inference from M. de Rosambeau's silence, but involuntarily she felt more timid and averse to talk with him; which he did not seem to perceive, but conversed readily and agreeably as before on all

other subjects, never adverting to the story of Madame St. Clercy.

Among young ladies who dress for the same balls and are candidates for the same hearts, a sort of *inimical* friendship often exists, arising from forced companionship and natural rivalry. From this feeling Oonagh was exempt, partly from the entire absence of envy, belonging to a refined and generous disposition, and partly from being so wholly and devotedly attached to Sir Maurice that she neither observed nor prized the general effect of her own attractions on others, far less did she grudge a similar triumph in her companions. But Euphemia Douglas, idle, vain, and objectless, with beauty enough to nourish conceit, not enough to content the craving of vanity, was haunted by the wish to be more admired than Oonagh, for whom she professed great friendship and admiration, usually saying to each of the gentlemen whose notice she deemed valuable, "I must show you my friend Oonagh Lynch—is she not the most beautiful creature in the world?" If the eyes or tongue of her hearer

admitted the truth of the assertion, she qualified her praise by adding,—“ I know you think her too pale, too serious, rather inanimate ; but that is only because she is so much in love with Sir Maurice Bellew—she has no eyes for any one else. I must introduce you to her, though she will not remember you two minutes afterwards. Is she not lovely ? I am determined you shall think so—I am so fond of her !”

As these young ladies, from their situation at St. Germain's, were much thrown together, and Euphemia, when her vanity did not interfere, was remarkably good-humoured and obliging, Oonagh had partly confided to her the story of Eugene St. Clercy, and both had endeavoured to interest those friends whom they considered best able to serve him ; but every passing hour now impoverished all belonging to St. Germain's, and the assistance they were enabled to collect was so small, that Oonagh was ashamed to offer till she had augmented it by the sale of a jewel of her own.

The last day of the interval she had named to Madame St. Clercy was approaching : on the eve of the preceding one, Mr. de Rosambeau

who was in the saloon, approached her as she stood a little apart in a window. "I have been able, I am in hopes, Miss Lynch," said he, "to fulfil one of your commands; I wish my success may encourage you to honour me with many more."

"I hope," said Oonagh, "that I never appeared so assuming, as to seem to give commands."

"The expressed wish of some persons has all the force of a command," replied Rosambeau. "But without discussing that question now, I must tell you that, not contented with the report of the surgical advisers young St. Clercy had already obtained, I brought him to hear the opinion of the most celebrated men in Paris: they decided that his blindness proceeds from cataract, which may speedily be remedied, and that his case is a very hopeful one. I conveyed this intelligence to M. Marsan, who readily consented to rest his consent on the success of the operation. And the easiest of all my tasks was to relieve the present distress of Madame St. Clercy, as that was effected by a very small sum of money. Both families

are now full of gratitude to you, and joyful anticipations of the future; and I also owe to you the opportunity of assisting them, and the very delightful contemplation of so much happiness so easily produced."

"And which is *your* work," interrupted Oonagh. She attempted to thank Rosambeau, but her eyes filled with tears, and the rich red glow of an autumn sunset overspread her cheek and forehead. Her words were few and interrupted; surprise, pleasure, and gratitude, robbed her manner of that grave and tranquil grace which usually distinguished it. Conscious of this embarrassment, she involuntarily raised her eyes, and beheld those of Euphemia riveted on her face with keen and angry observation, while the purple and circumscribed flush of anger on her cheek showed the painful interest she took in their conversation. The real reason, however, did not occur to Oonagh, who considered herself too entirely belonging to Maurice, to be likely to excite the jealousy of those who loved other men; but, without being able to analyse Miss Douglas's glance at her, it gave her an uneasy sensation.

Rosambeau also, with not unreasonable vanity, misinterpreted the nature of Oonagh's gratitude. He thought she felt that sort of regret in discouraging his attention, which a French poet has happily ascribed to Daphne, when, being by her own prayer transformed to a laurel to escape her divine lover, who overtook her when the transformation was almost complete, he says, her last female feeling was a reproach to her father, a regret for her lover, who clasps the tree, and,

“ Sous l'écorce qu'il presse,
Il sent palpiter un cœur.”

So, though marriage and Maurice might still be inevitable, she would recollect that the latter was not the only lover who had deserved her favour.

The first moment the maids of honour were alone, Oonagh said, “ Did you wonder, Euphemia, at my long conversation with M. de Rosambeau ?”

“ Oh no, my dear,” replied Miss Douglas, tossing back her bright ringlets ; “ there is nothing so very astonishing, in seeing young ladies coquet with young gentlemen.”

“ I hope it would be astonishing,” said Oonagh gravely, “ to see me coquet with any one ; but I will tell you the subject of our conversation ;” and she related all that had passed. But Euphemia, who in Rosambeau’s conduct only saw an instance of complaisance and good-nature prompted by a wish to please Oonagh, concluded that the latter had sunk the most interesting part of the dialogue ; and she retained her original opinion.

Though Oonagh’s compassion for Eugene and his mother had for a short time interposed another anxiety, that diverted her thoughts from solicitude for her own, it may be guessed that, even in the short interval, she often thought with inexpressible pain, that Schenk had perished without absolving her from the promise which forbade her confidence to Maurice.

He had perished — that wretched Schenk ! her release was impossible ; and the very manner of his death showed the deceitful mockery, the illusive promises of the dark agency he had invoked. She started from sleep, when she beheld, during its influence, the corse of the

German with glaring eyes and fixed teeth, as he lay among the fragments of his instruments on the night he died. Sometimes the body seemed fraught with intelligence, as it appeared when the flaming lamp lent its wavering light to the ghastly countenance while she supported him at the house of the St. Clercy's; he seemed to rise up to threaten, to mock, to reprove her, in a strange sepulchral voice. At other times he had no voice; he struggled to speak, he gesticulated with violence, he seemed angry that she did not comprehend him, yet uttered nothing but a wild and interrupted groan. Sometimes she thought herself confined in the laboratory; she could not move; Schenk was still before her, inanimate or dying, and, when she looked around for help in the dim apartment, strange countenances glared in the spaces between the chests and jars; laughter was around her, she could not discern from whence it arose. She started shrieking from her bed, and was long awake ere she could convince herself that she was indeed in her quiet chamber at St. Germain's, the moon silvering the highest crests of the dark forest of Laye,

and the tapestry hangings only bent by the hilarious summer wind of France.

Meanwhile, every hour brought coldest sadness and discouragement to the exiled Court ; even those who supported King James in Ireland, were discontented at the arbitrary and unpopular measures his unhappy situation forced him to adopt. The Catholics, so long oppressed, oppressed in their turn the humble Protestants. In the sweeping proscription that ensued, some of the noblest Irish were included ; and when the King at length perceived the zeal of his friends had been too forward, and wished to restore the churches taken from the reformed clergy, those who had risked all for him would yield nothing. The narrowness of his resources, which obliged him to find some symbol to pledge for money, had induced him to issue a coinage of base money, and the necessity was urged as a matter of reproach ; the taxes he was compelled to levy, were considered as voluntary tyranny ; and he learned that misfortunes in kings and ministers are always accounted faults. The victory of Count Chateau-renaud was not complete

enough to cheer the Jacobites : it was justly said, “ that the English thought themselves beaten, because they were not conquerors on their own element ; and the French thought themselves conquerors because they were not beaten.*

But the time approached that was to decide between the rival father and son, — the Boyne alone separated them. Probably the latest moments of hope and confidence ever enjoyed by James, were on its banks, when in expectation of the battle so long shunned by Schomberg ; but while the public rejoicings at Paris had hardly ceased, that were to celebrate the supposed death of William from the cannon-ball which so narrowly missed him, when for the first time genuine, uncounterfeit exultation shone from the black eyes of Mary of Modena, one of those murmured reports which precede the knowledge of great public events, suddenly arrived. Many who were unwilling to declare it, had heard somehow that the day of the Boyne-water had set on a field which was red with the best blood of the Jacobites. This

* Dalrymple.

even reached the Queen ; but hope was with her too rare a guest to be easily suffered to depart. The first intelligence that reached her, told only the death of the aged Schomberg, and that event was much in their favour ; but at length the blow came, and all the details of the engagement, complete defeat, and most unexpected return of the vanquished King, brought desolation and despair to his court and his followers.

Among the list of victims was the name of Sir Maurice Bellew ! who having fought as a gentleman of his valour and fidelity might be expected to do, after having two horses shot under him, was seen lying on the ground, defaced with wounds, and apparently in the last struggle of parting life. The officer who reported this event, and had himself been wounded, had escaped on a swift horse, whose rider at that moment had been killed.

The overwhelming horror of this event rendered Oonagh insensible to the varieties of affliction the battle had caused to all around her. Affliction is generally the time for self-reproach, and I believe it rarely happens with those who have candour and judgment enough to be sin-

cere with themselves, that they cannot trace in their calamity the castigation or the result of a fault. Oonagh had too often bewailed and repented her's, ere this sorrow reached her, not to have those feelings aggravated to agony afterwards. The succession of misfortunes that had befallen her, since her engagement with Bellew, seemed as the punishment of sin; and she resolved, if by some unlooked-for happiness he had escaped death, to dissolve their engagement, and devote the remainder of her life to prayer and penitence in a convent of stricter rule than that in which she had once determined to end her days; and if he had really perished, that was the only natural way to dispose of her after-life. She almost thought it was only for his sake she wished him to survive.

On the blood-stained banks of the Boyne, Sir Maurice lay for some hours insensible; but at length consciousness returned, and he felt the smarting of his wounds in the free summer air, and recollected all that had passed. He essayed to rise, but his feebleness prevented his moving. He was surrounded by the dead only; he had already been stripped of the greater part

of his clothes, and to this circumstance he owed a great aggravation of his suffering, and the preservation of his life. He was presently aware of the approach of human voices, and guessing them to be the plunderers of the dead, remained without moving and with closed eyes. Close to him lay another officer, who they saw had been also robbed of his garments, and they exclaimed that there was nothing left, and after some short discussion departed with smothered oaths.

Soon after he heard the shrill voice of an aged female, who appeared to be seeking the corse of some beloved one, with the eager vehemence of her country ; her mingled prayer and lamentation were uttered aloud, and Maurice felt, to a woman on such a search, he ran no danger in discovering himself. He was right : with ingenious charity the poor woman proposed he should pass for the son she had lost, and, placing him on a turf cart which she had brought in the hope of bearing her son home, she assisted him to her cottage, dressed him in the coarse linen of her son, and procured the

assistance of a charitable priest who was in the neighbourhood in disguise.

This good man had some knowledge of surgery, which benevolence to the poor of a wild and unpopulous district had first taught him to exercise, and he carefully and skilfully attended Maurice, whom the woman continued to call her son, and who on a bed of heath and straw, with no other food than whey and potatoes—with no other luxury than quiet and sweet air, recovered his health more rapidly than many similar sufferers “with all appliances and means to boot.”

Ere he was nearly recovered, he suffered agonies of anxiety to know how it fared with Oonagh, and with the cause of King James. He knew not how far it might be safe to trust his kind hostess, whose simplicity might be as fatal as ill-will; but the priest might be expected to wish well to the Jacobites. Maurice frequently gazed in doubt at the benevolent Father Dominick, not daring to ask what he died to know.

A month had passed in anxious ignorance,

when one morning his wounds appeared so nearly well, that he observed, "He might hope soon to be able to work again."

The priest smiled, and said, "Yes, you may resume the work you left incomplete." He paused, but as Bellew did not reply, added, "Do you really think this bed of straw and coarse linen deceived me? Could you suppose I ever imagined you were the son of old Sheelah? When she first brought me hither, I saw instantly by your appearance the pretext was untrue; and your hands alone would have proved that you had never engaged in any labour. To prevent your feeling anxiety that would have disturbed your mind and delayed your cure, I have forborne to show my incredulity. I will now reply to any questions you wish to ask; and, to anticipate some, can inform you the country here is quiet, and submits to the victor. The King is safe, and you have not been sought for."

Bellew, relieved from the oppressive reserve he had hitherto maintained, now learned all that had passed since his seclusion. Through the assistance of Father Dominick, he obtained

from his agent some money due to him, which enabled him to recompense Sheelah's charity, and to leave a sum in the hands of the priest to assist any other victims to the cause who might then be in need of succour; and proceeded on his way to the coast.

On his journey, he was to pass by the noble hall which had so lately called him master. It was in the night that he trod a well-known footpath which led through his park. The pale moonbeams silvered the most salient parts of the quiet towers he never more should revisit in "pleasure, pomp, and power." He heard the bark of the dogs that had lately been his; and saw the cottages of tenants who had for generations lived under his family. He could hardly believe that fair scene, full of the recollections of his youth, would now pass for ever from his eyes! The spots where he had played in infancy—where he had seen his parents—where he should have dwelt with Oonagh—which once promised to continue the property of his children's children, would own a new master! His eyes fell on the old Church where all his ancestors reposed. He felt an irrepressible wish to enter his own

home, knowing it was for the last time ; to enter the long gallery, and bid adieu to the picture of his father and mother which hung there, great as the risk of detection must be.

He cautiously turned his steps towards the house, when he distinctly heard the hasty approach of some one ; and drawing forth a knife, the only weapon left him, he prepared to sell as dear as might be, the life recognition would cost him. It was a dog, which rushed forward, whining, to offer caresses, which, in spite of his situation, he could not resist returning ; for it was Vourneen, a small spaniel which had been given by Oonagh, and in consequence was so highly prized by him, that, when he attended the King to Ireland, to save this animal " from the event of the none-sparing war," he had sent it to Castle Bellew, which had now, with all it contained, ceased to be his property, for he stood a proscribed exile on his own land !

Vourneen's noisy expression of joy was soon echoed by other dogs. Some of the lattices in the castle opened ; it was evident the inhabitants were alarmed. What rendered this cir-

cumstance more unfortunate for Maurice was, that the moon shone with such clear lustre that all objects were as distinct as in daylight. The dark woods, it is true, were clothed in the rich luxuriance of summer, and offered a shelter till the day should return. Sir Maurice knew that, if he fled, Vourneen must follow and disclose his hiding-place; he therefore caught her up, and precipitately fled. Immediately several shot were discharged at him, which happily did not arrest his flight, though he heard balls whistle round him, and one of them he feared had wounded the dog; but he rapidly proceeded till he cleared the woods of Castle Bellew, and found he was no longer pursued by its present occupants. He then found himself in an extensive bog, thinly scattered with bushes of whins, alder, stunted birch, and sweet gale, covered with heather, and frequently indented with little pools. On the banks of one of these he sat down. He was well acquainted with the ground, having frequently shot over it in happier times, and he now knew he was secure from interruption of foes.

He placed Vourneen on the ground, and it

was with greater sorrow than he wished to own to himself he could feel on such an occasion, that he discovered his little favourite had died while in his arms ! A shot had entered its body, and it had perished apparently of inward bleeding. After some moments of regret, he sank the dog into the pool, that his pursuers might not, by finding it, be enabled to trace his route ; and having proceeded a mile further to a sheltered spot, he lay down for a few hours to rest.

The fatigue of the early part of the night made his sleep so heavy, that the sun shone broad on the bog when he awoke, and he dared not pursue his first intention of trying to find a cottage, till the evening should afford him the possibility of escaping, should the persons he first applied to prove unfriendly or treacherous. The pains of want he was forced to endure for the course of that day ; but as it declined, he made for a sort of public-house on the edge of the bog, which he had formerly seen. He warily approached it, and placing himself behind a turf-stack and the house, he obtained a nook, from whence he could observe the inha-

bitants as they entered or departed. It seemed that the farm servants were engaged at a distance, and he heard the discontented voice and interrupted mutterings of the master, and sometimes the clear tones of a female, whose utterance seemed that of a Scot. She seemed to be urging her husband to repair a broken paling not far from Sir Maurice's hiding-place.

"Why then sorrow mend those dirty Jacobites!" said the male voice; "they'd break any man's pale to mend the pale of their church: and sorrow the stick they've left me, besides firing Peter Mulcatry's turf-stack, and burning his sheep instead of roasting them!"

"That was a chance, M'Causlane. They had made their fire too near the stack. And for the sheep, it was tied, and they were ordered away without having time to unloose, let alone eat it."

"Then I wish they may never eat another, or any thing better than the leather our friends were forced to eat at Londonderry;—sure and it's too good for them!"

"True for you, John M'Causlane," said another male voice, which had approached sing-

ing during this discourse, and now resumed the well-known ballad—

“ The Protestants of Drogheda
May bless their brave commanders ;
For they’d have been all burnt to-day,
If we had been in Flanders :
So let us all kneel down and pray,
Both now and ever a’ter;
And may we ne’er forget the day
King William cross’d the water !”

“ And it’s myself that will drink good luck to him this summer evening, with you, John M’Causlane, and come for no other purpose in life.”

“ And it’s welcome you are, Mr. O’Toole, sir,” replied John M’Causlane, whistling, and calling “Peggy :” which seemed at once understood as a prelude to all kind of hospitality. Refreshments were spread on a table which Peggy placed before the bench at the door. The repast lasted a considerable time ; and so exhausted was Sir Maurice with fatigue and abstinence, that he would gladly have joined them, had the proposed toast being less unpalatable. Eager discussion of intelligence, false, true, and improbable, took place ; and from

these humble foes did he first learn that King James had retired to France : which then seemed to him a more certain sign of the conclusion of the struggle in Ireland, than it actually proved.

Meantime the flowing cups went round the board, with “ no allaying Thames,” as *Lovell* elegantly expresses it ; and if the “ careless heads” of Messrs. M‘Causlane and O’Toole were not “ crowned with roses,” their hearts certainly burnt with “ loyal flames,” which exhaled in oaths, execrations, snatches of song, abuse of the Jacobites, and protestations of friendship. Their voices grew hoarse, their words stammering ; but as lamps flame brightly for a moment before extinction, one generous effort enabled them, with clasped hands, to recommence the ballad already sung, and impress on the echoes that —

“ July the first, in Old Bridge-town

There was a grievous battle,

And many slain lay on the plain

By thund’ring cannons’ rattle.”

But it was the final burst of Mr. M‘Causlane’s zeal, who sank into profound repose at the conclusion ; and after some fruitless attempts to

awake him on the part of Mr. O'Toole, he addressed a hasty adieu to the female — “ Then, good evening, ma'am ; I must be going. Faith ! it's a small drop does for John M'Causlane, anyhow. Well, I would not wish to be one that could not take a glass now and then without——Sure, ma'am, it's rather foggy this evening. It's myself that can hardly tell the way, it looks so mighty uneven. Holy martyrs ! but a small drop does for John M'Causlane ! ”

He departed staggering ; and all was silence but for the whirring of Peggy's spinning-wheel, who at length began to sing ; and, with some trifling interruption from M'Causlane's nasal accompaniment, Maurice heard the following ballad :—

“ The lark that sang in the lift sae clear
 Wones now in the whin-buss laigh ;
 His speckled breast beats hard with fear,
 And oh, but his sang is wae !

Well away !

The thistle bends his purple head
 With night-dew on for tears ;
 The royal thistle is not dead,
 But they 've cut awa' his spears !

Well away !

He' ll wither in a foreign town—
I doubt he 'll ne'er win home ;
Oh, French-wind blow thé thistle down
Ance mair across the faem !
Well away !”

Peggy's song was soft and expressive of feelings so different from her husband's, that Maurice, who knew how safely man may, in any circumstances, rely on female humanity, was tempted to issue from his hiding-place. His appearance was not calculated to alarm ; and Peggy, after her first start of surprise, comprehended the situation of her guest, who received from her all the succour his situation required.

She luckily was a Scotchwoman in her hospitality, prejudices, and loyalty, though wedded to the furious M'Causlane, who remained in drunken sleep till far in the next day, when Maurice was advanced in his progress to join a small detachment of King James's troops which was then preparing to return to France, where he soon arrived, and proceeded to seek his Majesty's commands at St. Germain's.

Oonagh, in the distress of supposing that Maurice had fallen, wrote to her aunt a kind

of half-confidence, confessing that, in moments of discouragement, she was often attempted to ascribe the constant ill-fortune that pursued her to her having swerved from her original intention of dedicating herself to the austerity of a religious life; she inquired her aunt's opinion, and besought her advice. In due time she received a reply, commending her desire to repair the error into which she had been led by her youthful attachment; and adjuring her to obey the dictates of conscience, and return to her first and natural destination. If Bellew was dead, there was the less to regret in giving up this world, its false and treacherous pleasures; and if he survived, her sacrifice to duty would bring blessings on the object of her warmest affections, and might perhaps change his destiny altogether.

“Your sacrifice will be great,” proceeded her aunt, “but, dear Oonagh, it will be but *one* sacrifice; living a worldly life will force you to make a thousand, some without merit made to selfish fellow-creatures, and some perhaps equally painful, of a less harmless character. In the cloister you will be removed

from all external temptation, and no earthly misfortune can befall you. You cannot see your husband inconstant or unkind ; no rivals will machinate (perhaps successfully) to take him from you, or, even if unsuccessful, awake angry and jealous feelings in your heart, and unchristian malice in your temper ; — you will not be doomed to lose young and promising children, or to weep over the ungrateful perversity of those who survive ; and if all of them fulfill every hope of your heart, every wish of your vanity, you can witness but a short period of their career—they belong to another generation ! You will not endure the estrangement of friends, or long for pomps and ambitious gratifications, which to the nun are but as the wild pageant in a dream ;—and you will have saved Sir Maurice Bellew from the temptation to violate a duty, by bringing back to the world one who had already resolved to renounce it, and from the highest motives !”

Though an escape from the cares of the world, by renouncing its pleasures, did not appear to Oonagh a prospect so captivating as Theresa expected ; the idea of buying off, by

her self-dedication, the many afflictions which seemed gathering on their mutual destiny, had as much influence over the superstitious mind and generous, unselfish heart of Oonagh, as it could have over that of any human being ; and during the uncertainty of Bellew's having survived the battle, Oonagh informed Theresa that her argument, and the aspect of their destiny, disposed her to make this final offering of her life. After she had despatched this concession, her mind was more tranquil ; she had a melancholy satisfaction in thinking she had done all that remained to be done, that she had resolved on the only atonement for her fault in employing Schenk ; and she resumed her duties about the Queen with composure.

On the succeeding day she was surprised by the intelligence of Maurice's escape, and of his return to France :—she might expect to see him in a few days ! She was deeply struck by the coincidence between her resolution and tidings so joyful !

While the suspense of Oonagh had lasted, though M. de Rosambeau, had avoided any attention that might bear the construction of a demonstration of attachment, he had not been

equally successful in concealing all his interest in Miss Lynch ; and none, as may be supposed, was so acute in its detection, as the jealous eyes of Euphemia, whose resentment was very much increased by observing Rosambeau's reception of the news of Sir Maurice's escape. In vain as a man of the world, and a *French* man of the world, did he exercise the strictest control over his voice, words, and countenance ; Miss Douglas was too alert in her scrutiny to fail in obtaining knowledge of his true feelings. Indeed, he laboured under a disadvantage common to all those who are habitually solicitous to repress their obvious display ; a much slighter indication of their nature served to betray them, and was sought for by the observers.

Maurice's arrival at St. Germain's took place rather sooner than had been expected. On that day the Queen was at Versailles, and Oonagh in attendance upon her ; M. de Rosambeau had contrived to be there also ; and both these incidents contributed to vex and irritate Miss Douglas.

After the first kind greeting with which she met Maurice, he happened to say how unlucky

he thought himself in arriving at a time when he could not obtain the honour of paying his respects to the Queen, and the pleasure of meeting Oonagh.

“Oh,” said Euphemia, “I think you have arrived extremely *à-propos*; I do not know that all our friends may be of the same opinion.” This being said with a bitter smile, and a glance inviting all present to share a hidden meaning, struck Maurice, though he could not understand to what she alluded.

Other discourse intervened, but after some time Maurice again spoke of Oonagh, making enquiries as to her looks and health. Euphemia, in the same marked manner, assured him Miss Lynch was extremely well, and her spirits supported by the kind attention of most zealous friends.

Some obscure hints of the same sort at last induced him to ask what she meant; and after a proper affectation of reluctance to make mischief between her friends, and a profession of regret at telling anything disagreeable to him, she at length owned that people thought M. de Rosambeau very attentive, and that Oonagh

appeared to treat him with great confidence and regard: indeed, she hardly ever spoke to any other gentleman, and he paid her the most devoted attention.

Persons of strong feelings or quick tempers, when entirely silent on subjects that powerfully affect them, often behave with great forbearance, but, if they once allow themselves to speak at all, lose every trace of self-command; and thus it fared with Euphemia, more easily, as Maurice, though naturally of a jealous disposition, did not attach so much importance to her accusation as she expected, and partly guessed the motive which prompted it. Provoked at being disbelieved, she recounted a number of small circumstances; and certainly they did not lose in weight by her mode of relating them, and the comments she gave.

The joy of meeting after all the perils of the Irish campaign, was however unclouded for the first hours. Oonagh forgot her promise to her aunt Theresa, and Maurice scarcely remembered the existence of Rosambeau, though the latter was constantly at St. Germain's, and did not as readily give place to Bellew in public as

he had formerly done, when both were near Oonagh. She too, since the service rendered to Eugene St. Clercy, had acquired a more intimate manner of treating Rosambeau ; and she took an early opportunity of detailing that circumstance to Maurice, who did not see anything to offend him in her gratitude.

Another species of misfortune began to press more heavily on the exiled Court than it had hitherto done. The proscribed Irish and Scotch flocked in crowds to St. Germain's, many of them suffering all the embarrassment of absolute penury. In spite of many sacrifices, and the utmost economy, King James had it not in his power to assist all who deserved it. The claims too were sometimes increased by those who set forth pretended services, discovered imaginary plots, and offered impracticable mediation : in some instances these pretensions were successful, and formed a just matter of complaint to those who considered themselves better entitled to whatever might be obtained from James's gratitude. But amidst the envy, want, *tracasserie*, and evil bodings of the unhappy society, there were more instances of touching devotion to

their master and his cause, than perhaps ever was shown by any other set of men.

To fulfil a duty with the enthusiastic fidelity which arises from passion, claims and receives applause and admiration ; but our eyes fill with tears, and our hearts swell with sympathy and pity, for the victims to fruitless devotion, to mistaken zeal — for those who have not “ their reward,” who forfeit all for an illusion ; who are not respected as having done wisely, nor applauded as having done well ; whose lives and fortunes have been counted as nothing, compared with the integrity of a sentiment which no duty imposed ! There are few instances in history of such true and ill-requited personal attachment as that which actuated King James’s followers ; particularly the wreck of Lord Dundee’s forces, who were some at St. Germain’s, and some quartered at Arras, Lisle, and other towns in Flanders.

After the shock the event of the battle gave to the Jacobites, Maurice still retained the hope of distinguishing himself in the French King’s service, who still continued the pensions of the unfortunate English officers. He again

entreated Oonagh to agree to an immediate marriage. "We are now," said he, "poor, and I begin to fear we must ever remain so, but we shall still have enough for happiness : if the remainder of our lives is spent together, we shall not regret the worldly prosperous time which was passed asunder."

While Maurice uttered these words, bolts of ice and of fire seemed to pass alternately through the brain of Oonagh. Her sight failed, her hands were chilled and powerless, her heart beat so thick that she was almost suffocated. A thousand voices seemed to cry, "Now comes the combat—have strength *now* to renounce the happiness which is the fruit of a crime.—Sacrifice Maurice to Maurice!—the pain will pass away.—Have courage *now*!—Angels watch the trial!" She paused, the colour fled from her cheeks and lips, but her sad and resolved eye turned to Bellew.

"You will, I know you will, believe me, Maurice, when I say how much beyond all blessings I valued the hope of being your wife. Before I knew you, I had determined to renounce the world, to dedicate my whole exist-

ence to a religious life in that holy retreat where my youth was spent. I expressed the resolution to my aunt, to my confessor, to my companions: even after I knew you, after I had seen how deserving you were of all affection and admiration, for some time I adhered to it. But a time came—when—you loved me.—I forgot all things but that. Maurice, I did ill! The sorrows, the perpetual misfortunes that have befallen us, show me that I should return to my duty. Events seem to point out obstacles, and chastisement will pursue and reprove a union which leads me from my vowed life. I have determined not to marry you! I know you may make me waver in appearance—you may make my resolution difficult to keep, but you cannot make me break it. I shall shed many tears; you may render them more bitter, but you will not again change my destiny!”

“Oonagh!” said Maurice impatiently, “you might have given me this repulse when I first told you I loved you; but upon what pretext can you withdraw the promise made so often, so deliberately, with the consent and approba-

tion of your father, and which even now, you say, is not withdrawn from fancy, but opinion? If you love me, remember you are pledged to me past withdrawing; if you do not love me, of all created men I should be the last to claim your unwilling hand; however unjust, fickle, and treacherous such conduct may appear to others, I am willing to submit at once, and without murmur, to the decision of your fancy. But is it possible that you can wish to part with one whom you have so long flattered by the assurance of attachment! and that when all other objects and aims in life are lost to us! Oonagh, think well ere you decide! If at the end of a week you persist in your resolution, I will submit; but you will not, you cannot be in earnest!

“ You are suffering under a fit of superstitious discouragement from low spirits. Shake it off, beloved Oonagh; exert your understanding. Why should a marriage, which was at least suitable, and to which all friends consented — why, I repeat, should it bring sorrow and punishment? Your father would have been better pleased to see you my wife,

than in any other situation. He would have deeply grieved to hear your purpose changed."

During the whole of this appeal, unceasing tears had poured from Oonagh's eyes, convulsive sobs heaved her bosom.

Maurice observed her with anxiety and surprise. "I would fain hope," said he, "that this is a little female caprice, of which you already repent; compose yourself. Forgive my vanity when I say, that we have loved too long and too well to allow me to suppose you are suddenly become indifferent: it will be long ere I can believe you have changed. Your reluctance to fulfil our contract now, may, perhaps, be inspired by prudence, but have faith in our destiny: the proscribed nobles and landholders of Ireland are too numerous, and of too much consequence, not to have their submission accepted, and their estates restored, even if some happy turn of fortune does not restore the King; and if our fortunes are crushed for ever, will separate poverty be more endurable? Surely not. Oonagh, let this dispute pass as if it had not been. You retract—do you not?"

“Do you then think me capable of caprice and affectation?—and to you!” said Oonagh. “Oh, Maurice, why should I inflict this sorrow on myself, if I had not completely, and after long deliberation, resolved to renounce our marriage? Do not give me the inexpressible pain of farther discussion, but believe me resolved, and forgive it. I shall never more know any happiness so great as that of hearing of yours, though I must neither create nor share it. I shall hear of your fame, your fortune, and even of the happy one who succeeds me in your heart, with an interest, an ardent interest, which no other human being can know. Believe this, I implore you. Weeks, months, or years can make no difference, except that I may look upon our separation with greater calmness, though not with less sorrow!”

“Still, give me the week of deliberation I ask,” said Bellew. “I will not say a word to distress you now.”

CHAPTER XIII.

THERE was something in Oonagh's conduct that was quite inexplicable to Bellew. The ostensible motive she gave for dismissing him, appeared so insufficient, particularly as it had not sooner been of influence, that, without being naturally suspicious, he might be pardoned for supposing she had not been quite sincere, as indeed was the fact. He could not guess that her penitence for having won him by the operation of Schenk's spell weighed on her mind, and more heavily than the thought that she had swerved from her vocation to the cloister. He revolved every motive likely to affect her mind, and could not avoid reverting to what Miss Douglas had said relative to Rosambeau's admiration of Oonagh. If she had changed, if either fancy

or ambition had turned her heart to another, ought he to seek to bind her hand? was she deserving of his regret? was not remonstrance a self-inflicted humiliation?

But Bellew was the most frank and sincere of men, and his natural impulse was to question her on the subject; he would do so with so dispassionate and conciliating a manner, that she would confide to him her real feelings: if she wished to become the wife of Rosambeau, he would instantly submit to renounce her; if he had only to combat a superstitious reluctance arising from their misfortunes, he might yet overcome it.

The next day but one, the Queen was going to Versailles, and Euphemia was to attend her: this seemed a favourable opportunity to seek an interview with Oonagh, and in the evening he knocked at the door of the apartment which was the usual sitting-room of the two young ladies.

The soft sweet voice of Oonagh bade him enter, though she started at beholding him. She was alone, as he expected; her embroidery frame was covered, her lute hung silent on the

wall, some books lay near, but closed. Oonagh's hand was on a book of devotion, her eyes were fixed on the ground, and by her stood a glass of water with which she had been trying to allay the thirst of anxiety. She coloured, and her eyes flashed from the pleasure of seeing him of whom she was thinking, without any hope of seeing him.

In this reception, which had nothing to cherish painful distrust, Maurice forgot the doubts on which he had lately been dwelling. He sat down, prepared to state frankly what his suspicions were, to discuss and combat the opinions which induced her to decline their marriage. Oonagh, on her side, was delighted to find that the apparently just cause of discontent she had given, had not kept him from seeking her. She repented her victory; she was weary of contending with her lover, and her heart; she would gladly have heard any arguments likely to still her consciousness of evil and her dread of punishment. Perhaps had he then spoken, had she then replied, a different fate had awaited them.

A high Indian skreen was between the door and the table at which they were sitting. Any

person entering could not be seen till he had passed it. At the moment Maurice was beginning to speak, they were both surprised by the entrance of Rosambeau, who, ere he observed she was not alone, uttered one sentence :

“ You do not know how anxiously I have looked for this opportunity ”——What farther he might have said was suppressed, for he then became aware of the presence of Maurice.

There was a pause ; a contemptuous irritation curled the lip of Bellew, and was visible to Oonagh, and Rosambeau was confounded at finding them together. He had observed that some disagreement existed, and, for the first time, conceived hopes of supplanting Bellew. He too had observed the absence of Euphemia, with the purpose of obtaining an interview with Oonagh. She thought that the unannounced entrance of Rosambeau, whose manner appeared to indicate a certainty of being welcome, might justly incense Maurice, whose countenance did show displeasure. She blushed painfully, observing gravely——“ This is an unexpected visit, M. de Rosambeau.”

“ Not, I hope, a forbidden one ? ” he replied,

casting a momentary but defying glance at Bellew, who rising slowly, said,—“I will not interrupt your audience, Miss Lynch,” and bowing ironically, departed.

Rosambeau could not have chosen a less favourable moment to plead his cause. Oonagh was feverish with anger at his intrusion, and frozen with terror at the effect it might have on Bellew. Her natural pride and timidity induced an effort to hide these feelings.

Though the Count guessed them in part, he had gone too far to retract. He avowed the attachment he had felt from the time they first met at Paris, and had not confessed, from the general impression which had gone forth that she was engaged to Sir Maurice Bellew: that latterly, circumstances had led him to hope the world had been mistaken; and he now ventured to ask if such was the fact, and in the event of her being still free to choose, whether he might be permitted to try to obtain her preference.

Oonagh—the mild, kind, and courteous Oonagh, who had never yet uttered an unkind word to a human being, who had a double portion of that wish to say and do what is pleasing

to everybody, which is so frequent in early youth, before passion makes us partial and care renders us selfish,—Oonagh, who highly esteemed and liked Rosambeau, who remembered his kindness to St. Clercy with gratitude,—for the first time was swayed

“ By such poor passion as the maid

Who milks, and does the meanest chares ;”

and for a moment she was tempted to repulse with the most haughty coldness the ill-timed homage which was likely to cost her so dear. But, while Rosambeau spoke, she had time to recollect how unjust such treatment would be ; and recovering her natural manner, mildly and gracefully, but with sad and earnest decision, assured him of her friendship, and convinced him that he could never obtain her love. She admitted that no engagement now subsisted between Sir Maurice and herself, and that she had returned to her early determination of devoting herself to a religious life : “ Such a destiny alone,” she said, “ seemed fit for one who had already endured many misfortunes, and to whom the future seemed to promise many more.”

Her voice faltered slightly when announcing

her resolution ; but Rosambeau saw that, whatever her situation relative to Bellew might be, there was no hope for *him*.

“ M. de Rosambeau,” she said, as he was quitting the apartment, “ I am too grateful for your preference, and have too much confidence in your friendship, not to treat you with perfect candour. You say, that perhaps I may relinquish the intention of becoming a nun—that is impossible ; but, were it otherwise, there is but one man on earth I can love,—that man is Maurice Bellew ;—in good or evil, in riches or poverty, this wide world could offer me no other lot. I depend on your honour as a gentleman, and your friendship as a man, never to repeat, even to him, what I have now told you.”

The meeting with Oonagh having been so unfortunately interrupted, the confidence of Rosambeau’s manner, the confusion of her’s, made a deep and disagreeable impression on Maurice. He felt too, (what can never fail to be felt between intimate friends,) that something was untold ; that Oonagh had some reservation. As it was wholly impossible his wildest stretch

of imagination could reach what that really was, his conjectures naturally wandered among circumstances that were not ; he began to think their absence, the fear of poverty, the wish to escape from the humiliation of exile, the impression the successful and brilliant Rosambeau was likely to make, when opposed to the proscribed and beaten soldier, to whom she had plighted her early faith ? Were these the sentiments of Oonagh Lynch ? How odious then was her real character ! He could not find any other reason for her refusal : he justly concluded, that which she had given, if true, would have operated sooner on her conduct.

Euphemia jealous of Rosambeau, by collecting a thousand trifles, and repeating them with the comment of her own suspicions, daily urged Bellew to doubt Oonagh's fidelity.

The week thus elapsed, and Oonagh prepared for the last trial of her stability. But when the interview took place, the pleadings of Maurice were no longer the expressions of unbounded and confiding affection ; the chill that jealousy and suspicion cast over all he said, made it rather seem that he complied with a duty, or

enacted a courtesy, in urging her to change her resolution. Thinking her predetermined to refuse him on grounds she would not avow, he rather set forth reasons why she should not break the contract, than passionately claimed her affection. Instead of the eager importunity she dreaded her power to resist, his cold pleading would hardly have justified her pride in yielding, and her task became perfectly easy. He seemed rather to seek her motives with distrust and curiosity, than to linger on her past manifestation of attachment.

Oonagh could not persuade herself that the ill-timed visit of Rosambeau could produce such an alteration ; neither could the refusal which a week before he had so earnestly tried to reverse, have already effected it. What then could account for his indifference ? The spell had lost its force ! his affection was gone ! her hope had vanished, as Schenk's gold had perished in its incomplete principle ! She had paid self-esteem and fortune for her illusion, and he had paid for his with his life ! The mocking gifts of their sinful art had deceived both ; and she felt that in the depths of her heart a lingering hope

had been cherished that Maurice would prove that she ought to become his wife. If many gifts, little prized while they are ours, are bitterly regretted when taken away, what were her feelings when the only possession she valued was gone ! Though she had resolved to part with Bellew, it was a sacrifice, a self-immolation, to resign him ; she was not prepared to see him willing to resign her, to lose the hope of preserving his regretful recollection. The lot which she persuaded herself she had chosen as a penance, was no longer a choice, but forced upon her. She sustained her self-possession during the whole of their conversation, and adhered to her declared resolution.

Maurice, though he changed colour and the tones of his voice varied and faltered, when he had convinced himself that Oonagh was resolved, arose and said, “ Whatever I may think of your conduct to me, Oonagh, one bond must still exist between us. I was Sir Patrick’s chosen son, and I shall ever be your brother, your natural protector, till you choose another, or till you execute the intention you have announced of becoming a nun. I cannot believe

that the latter destiny will be yours, but I have no longer the right to dispute it. A more brilliant fate may easily be attained than that of being my wife, but a more devoted friend you will not soon find. Remember, that in difficulty, in danger, a word brings me to your side. Perhaps you have done well, prudently at least; may you be happy! The prospects of our friends are very dark, and times of trial are at hand. Fortune, home, and love, are now for me words without meaning; but fame remains. When you hear of me, you shall not blush for your early choice."

Oonagh would have given worlds to have interrupted him; to have told him only *once* how much he wronged her real feelings! how joyfully she would have accepted a lot which the humblest might pity, were he to have shared it! but an intolerable weight was on her chest, her tongue could not utter; she seemed as one bound by the night-mare, whose struggles are internal, who tries in vain to shriek for succour to friends he sees, but cannot call: had she attempted to speak, her passionate weeping, her deep affection, would have forced the whole

secret from her. Persons of strong feeling and proud character soon learn how much more easy it is to suppress all external demonstration of sensibility, than to show it in part; if they begin to speak, they cannot refrain from saying all. Thus did these two part!

Maurice obtained leave to join the remains of Dundee's troops that were then quartered in Flanders; and Oonagh remained in sorrow and anxiety at St. Germain's. The only intelligence likely to give her pleasure, she received in the account of Eugene St. Clercy's perfect recovery and marriage with Nathalia. Increasing gloom hung over all that pertained to the banished English; and at last she heard that the Scotch gentlemen, who no longer received the pay the King of France had hitherto allowed them, had petitioned James to be permitted to enter the French service as a volunteer company of private sentinels, that they might no longer burthen their embarrassed master. They accompanied this request with a protestation of the joy they should feel when he should again demand their loyal service, their arms, and their blood.

James besought them to relinquish this plan.

He had already witnessed the failure of a similar undertaking by a company of gentlemen whom he himself had commanded previous to the Restoration; some had died; some had retired in disgust at the restraint and humiliation of a state so new to them.

These young men could not be silenced. The pressure of penury—the still more irritating prospect of long years spent in ignominious obscurity, by those who had looked to earn a respected and glorious name, enabled them to resist his counsel. In vain he bade them consider, how those used to refinement and luxury could bear the privation incident to the life of a common soldier;—how those who had been used to command, could endure the degradation of the most servile obedience! Overcome, perhaps, by their entreaties; conscious that his and their situations were desperate, yet not willingly subscribing to the truth of that maxim which affirms, “He is a wise man who does at first what he must do at last,” he appeared to yield, and actually named three or four, whom he recommended as officers to the troop.

This proposal of his unfortunate followers seemed to infer such a total loss of hope in his fortune, that it is not surprising he avoided talking of a plan which he still, perhaps, hoped might never be put in execution. The time wore on, and nothing was yet done apparently towards the fulfilment of their intention.

In the beginning of September 1692, James had a levee, which was more fully attended than any preceding one had been for a long time; and the usual residents of St. Germain's observed the increase in their numbers was occasioned by the return of the officers from Flanders:—among these appeared Sir Maurice Bellew.

Pale, thin, and melancholy, the sadness of crushed hopes was marked on his brow. It was impossible not to compare the animated look and cheerful manner, with which he and some of his companions had departed for the Irish expedition, with their present depression and mortified appearance. She who beheld it with the deepest sympathy dared not raise her eyes, lest they should seem to ask what share she had in his sorrow. His greeting

was frank, kind, and brotherly, as when they had first met in Paris :—but it was “ no more but so.” The proud distrust which he had felt, when he attributed his rejection to M. de Rosambeau, had passed away : he saw that his supposed rival now very rarely made one of the exiled court. Even Euphemia Douglas had ceased to follow his step with her eye, and to echo his laugh with her own. She still coquetted at times ; but it was now with the old Marquis de Quersigni, who had a good estate in Lower Brittany, and the gout in both his legs. When the fit was on, he resolved to die in “ the odour of sanctity,” and drew up a will, constituting the Church his heir. When he was in tolerable health, he laid aside that intention with his crutches, and, repairing to St. Germain’s, gazed on Euphemia Douglas, and thought how well she would look as Marquise de Quersigni !

Bellew did not seek Oonagh when she was alone : he met her all day long at court ; frequently conversed with her, and strangers could not have thought them less than attached friends, or seen the great change that had taken

place in their mutual relations. She heard of the plan entertained by Maurice and his unhappy companions, supposing, (as young persons frequently do, when painful events are impending,) that something *must* interfere to prevent it; and not hearing the subject discussed for some time, she concluded the design had been relinquished.

The cheerful look that so many members restored to the society gave it, even reached the King. The appearance of desertion which had latterly prevailed, no longer oppressed him. He conversed with more ease and less abstraction than usual; and, having fixed that the next Wednesday should be devoted to one of those hunting-parties which formed the only amusement of which he ever partook, he invited such gentlemen as should be disengaged to be present at the entertainment. Some expressed their regret at not being able to attend; some promised to do so; Maurice Bellew and his friends only bowed silently and respectfully.

Observing this, Oonagh addressed him, and enquired whether he meant to come to the

hunting-party? "I could not translate your obeisance," said she; "you neither indicated refusal nor acceptance."

"Both and neither," said he; "I shall be here; but whether I join in that chase appears doubtful. To me a party of pleasure seems an unnatural situation; but I think I shall be here."

"Oh! then you surely must attend the King!" And she rejoiced to think she was sure of spending a whole day—a long September noon, in his company. Many opportunities of conversing together unrestrainedly would doubtless occur; she should have a reprieve from her destiny on that day; she would not think of the future; she might fancy Maurice still her own, and think as little of her conventual imprisonment as she had on former and more fortunate days. For the first time for a long period she anticipated a day that would bring her many pleasures.

On the appointed Wednesday, the King, followed by his attendants, passed through a garden on the way to mount his horse. The Queen and ladies were to attend him till the

hunt grew too ardent for their horsemanship. Oonagh had unconsciously taken unusual pains to adorn her beauty, though she repeatedly told herself that it signified little what her appearance might be; and she was not without satisfaction at beholding the complete success of her cares.

As Euphemia never had a more interesting object than her own face in contemplation, she also had tried to provide herself with self-gratulatory ruminations.

The train was numerous, and all went forth in hope and spirits. An unusual spectacle arrested their eyes: a troop of soldiers in the French uniform were drawn up on a grass-plot on the right hand, and saluted the King as he approached, who returned their salute, gazed earnestly, and asked who they were? He did not at first recognise the young and noble followers who that day week appeared at his levee, disguised in the borrowed accoutrements of a French regiment! as common soldiers! Struck to the heart at beholding these victims to his cause, to whom no other hope was left than that of earning a grave in a foreign land,

James turned pale ; the deep lines of care and age, indented, deepened, and contracted his face ; his lips closed firmly, and his eyes sought the ground. Probably he thought of the heavy change his fortunes had wrought for these young gentlemen. The greater number, but for him, might then have been pursuing their amusement on their own peaceful lands, among those bound to them in love and friendship ! For a moment he must have recalled the pining mothers, the forsaken wives, the orphaned children, who were then lamenting their eternal absence !—who still gazed on his picture with reverence, and prayed for his altar and his throne, in their solitary orison, without accusing him of whose existence the only proof to them was their life-long sorrow !

The whole of his train stood in mute dismay. The formation of this troop seemed to speak a prophecy to all ; the step they had taken, was the first public admission of the failure of the Royal cause.

Whose was the palest cheek ? whose eyes filled with the most blinding tears ? Oonagh, while she gazed on the lover she had lost, the friend

with whom she was now to part probably for ever, felt as if the solid world was crumbling away : the throbbing of her pulse sounded as the wing of a departing guardian angel ; she looked round scarcely believing the reality of what she saw, hoping the dream might cease. But the bright September sun still shone on Maurice and his friends in the humble uniform of private sentinels. The splendid past, with its wealth, its honour, noble friends, royal festivals, ambitious hopes, was now a dream ! The love of youth, the union which twice seemed so near, the blessing of her father, the gratulation of her friends—all were gone ! Separation, loneliness, regret, a recluse's life, was before her ; and for Bellew there remained poverty, exile, the hardships of war without its honours, and a military bondage in a foreign land ! For a moment she forgot that she had voluntarily renounced her lover, in the passionate wish to share his present humiliation and poverty,—to depart with him. Involuntarily she raised her clasped hands, exclaiming, “ Oh, Maurice ! ”—when the King, disgusted at the thought of the amusement which he had in-

tended to enjoy, feeling perhaps some remorse at having turned to frivolous diversion when the ruin of his followers rendered it indecent, suddenly forbade the chase, and returned to his oratory, where he spent the greater part of that day in prayer, meditation, and retirement.

Another day was appointed to review the devoted corps before they departed for the south of France, then the scene of military operation. Before that day arrived, Oonagh had time to recollect (what she considered as) her duty: it was the more easy to fulfil, as Maurice, seeing how desperate their situation had become, was the more ready to acquiesce in her rejection, expecting only a disastrous close to his fortunes and his life. Bitterly she thought of the wealth her father had forfeited—more bitterly of that which she had squandered:—the fair lands of Ard carrick would have rendered them rich even in exile; she had given them for a sinful hope, which remorse compelled her to resign! The hardships of poverty, the dangers of want, might have been saved to Bellew, had she been less rashly prodigal. Even the services she had helped to

render to Mrs. Grant and Madame St. Clercy, were a matter of self-reproach, since she had become convinced how hard the pressure of poverty would now fall on Maurice and his friends.

Till the day they were to be reviewed, Oonagh spent her time in preparing a number of small presents which she hoped might contribute to the comfort of Bellew ; among them she placed a small purse embroidered with her hair, and in it five gold pieces, the only money she possessed, and a slip of paper, on which was written, " From your sister Oonagh, who prays for you daily and nightly."

She wrote to Maurice, who no longer lived at St. Germain's as formerly, but remained at Paris, to beg he would come to see her before his departure ; for though she dreaded to meet him, lest he should discover how much she suffered at the thought of his going away, she still more dreaded his supposing her careless and unkind at this parting.

She remained in the expectation of his coming for some days. An opening door, the sound of a horse's feet approaching rapidly,

even the eyes of any person in the same chamber turning towards the window, made her cheek glow and her heart beat; for she thought all must watch the advent of Maurice with anxiety like her own. When this trial should be over, it would be time to take a final farewell of the court and the world. She had told herself so before, but the difficulty of putting irrevocable vows between them made her catch at every pretext for delay. It would be ungrateful to leave the Queen, who had shown her a thousand attentions, who had so often said she wished to be considered as a mother—that she had such comfort in being attended by the daughter of so faithful a friend as Sir Patrick; besides, there was no young lady of equal consequence to take her place at the declining Court, so that her retreat at this juncture would be a disrespect, nay, a failure in duty.

Such were the arguments by which Oonagh had silenced the voice of conscience, when, after rejecting her lover, she tried to believe that she wished to fulfil the remainder of her sacrifice. Those who have never magnified a courtesy

into a duty, or diminished a duty into a courtesy, as passion or vanity might prompt, are entitled to scorn her self-deception. She really wished to prove to Maurice that the world contained nothing for her, now that he was banished; and she began to comprehend that their misfortunes were irretrievable. Like most young persons brought up in affluence, the word poverty, the abstract idea, had not alarmed her—the details of its consequences were required to prove it an evil. Until now, the want of money, exile, seemed temporary inconvenience, which would cease at the King's restoration; and the whole party had taught her to consider that event as certain, and at no very distant period. Latterly, though her friends had spoken as confidently, their anxiety and discontent had been more obvious, and the suffering of poverty more imperious and general.

The reply of Maurice was as follows:—

“ My dearest Oonagh, I feel all the kindness and affection of your letter, as the greatest pleasure I can know. On the 5th of November we shall be reviewed at St. Germain's by his

Majesty in person ; on that day I shall see you again. A thousand small cares and embarrassments fill up my time, and lengthen my preparations for my new service. When we *do* meet, beloved Oonagh, do not let external circumstances—a word, a name, a dress, weigh as a real evil on your mind ; our situations may yet change many times before our course is run : a man may rise to eminence through a variety of obscure and humble avenues. Let us yield to our destiny with submission, for the present ; we owe it some blessings of great price—it has already ordained that we should know and love each other. I have conquered all the distrust, the unfair resentment, I felt at your apparently unkind rejection—forgive me for having so thought it. It was better for us both you did so wisely ; you have saved me the pain of leaving you as my wife in deep penury and abandonment, or that of seeing you suffer all the hardship of wandering in poverty, and among strangers, in a foreign land. Perhaps you will allow that my admission of the justice of your decision, and the right over your hand I resignedly cede, entitles me to make one

request. It is this: that whatever wish you may feel, either from (what I must call a mistaken) enthusiasm, or from the pressure of unforeseen distresses, to enter on a religious life, you will resist for two years. Make this concession to the man who was once your affianced husband. If Fortune should not relent towards us, you will have had time to revolve your plans, and decide in cooler judgment. But remember I advance no claim for myself, should a fairer lot offer from the hand of one with whom you can be happy. I shall rejoice in that happiness, in knowing you are saved from the darker view of our fortunes. It is wise to advert to the worst, but folly to dwell on it."

Oonagh wept bitterly over this letter. She saw how desperate their situation seemed to Bellew; she saw the kindness and disinterested regard which induced him so readily to acquiesce in their separation; but she asked herself if that was a mark of affection? Had he loved with the same intensity as herself, would he not rather have urged her to accompany him wherever he wandered?—would he not

rather have exacted her promise that she would never become the wife of another?—that the life which was not spent with him should be dedicated to the cloister?—would he not have guessed she would prefer the meanest cares, the most humble penury, if they were together, in a thatched cottage, to the proudest luxury in the most gorgeous halls of France? If he could not guess this, was it not that his affection had died with the spell that won it—the deceitful gift of the sorcerer Schenk? Woe for the happy past! woe for the sullen hours to come! woe for her crime! woe for her penitence!

On the 5th of November, a bright autumnal day, the Scotch troops approached the terrace of St. Germain's, announced by the wild shrill music of one of their own popular tunes. Some of the exiles had taught the band their favourite native melodies; it was like hearing the voice of a friend in that stranger land, cheering them onward. They appeared in the uniform of French foot soldiers, and marched to the air of "Had awa hame."

From the palace issued the small train who

usually attended the court, preceded by their melancholy master. His dark and strongly-marked face, wore a deeper cast of sadness, though he struggled for an appearance of cheerfulness and alacrity, while the troop performed the exercises before him ; when they had concluded, he repaired to the front of the line, and thus addressed them.

“ Gentlemen, my own misfortunes are not so nigh my heart as yours. It grieves me beyond what I can express, to see so many brave and worthy gentlemen, who had once the prospect of being the chief officers in my army, reduced to the station of private sentinels. Nothing but your loyalty, and that of a few of my subjects in Britain, who are forced from their allegiance by the Prince of Orange, and who will, I know, be ready on all occasions to serve me and my distressed family, could make me willing to live. The sense of what all of you have done and undergone for your loyalty, has made so deep an impression on my heart, that if ever it please God to restore me, it is impossible I can be forgetful of your services and sufferings. Neither can there be any posts

in the armies of my dominions, to which you have not just pretensions. As for my Son, your Prince, he is of your own blood—a child capable of receiving any impressions, and as his education will be from you, it is impossible he can forget your merits. At your own desire, you are now going a long march far distant from me. I have taken care to provide you with necessaries. Fear God ! love one another. Write your wants particularly to me, and depend upon always finding me your father and King.”

He then entered their ranks, and as he passed along enquired the name of every individual, which he inscribed in his pocket-book, and at the same time offered thanks particularly for his service. When he had addressed a kind word to each, he returned to the front, and taking off his hat, made them a gracious bow, fervently praying God to bless and prosper them. He turned to go, but feeling still a wish to thank them more amply, to say all their misfortune and fidelity deserved, he stepped back, bowed again, paused, and burst into tears.

The unfortunate gentlemen, affected to the last degree by this testimony of feeling and sympathy from one so much revered, knelt with one consent on the ground, and bowed their heads in solemn silence. They then rose, and passed him with the usual honours of war, and retired, while their band played "God save the King!"—an anthem first sung as a prayer for him who now heard it for the last time, and which has since become the national expression of loyalty to the succeeding dynasty.

A long march was before them ; it was nine hundred miles to Perpignan. Maurice hung behind his fellow-soldiers, and stole one hour to dedicate to Oonagh,—to a farewell more gloomy than he had ever yet taken. They had agreed to meet at a summer-house in the garden which overlooked the forest of Laye ; the road wound by the wall of the garden.

Maurice and his companions had resolved not to appear at the palace after they had assumed the dress which marked their degradation as foot soldiers ; though the King might have chosen still to receive them at his levée and table, as friends and sufferers for his

sake, they considered it more respectful and delicate not to try his condescension by exhibiting themselves as victims to their loyalty. From the ground where James reviewed them, they proceeded on their march.

Oonagh saw them passing. Those young men, guests at the same festivals, her partners in the dance, who but a few months before had entertained such brilliant visions of their future, were now the lowest servants of a foreign power ; “ the fly-slow hours would not determine the dateless limit of their long exile.”

“ Their native English now they must forego ;
And now their tongue’s use is to them no more
Than an unstrung viol, or a harp,
Or like a cunning instrument cased up,
Or being open, put into his hands
That knows no touch to tune the harmony.”

Nay, banishment was not the worst of their lot ; danger and degradation were added—at least such degradation as fortune can inflict without the loss of honour. Yet they appeared to march cheerfully. Their gorgets and sashes were now changed for cartouch-boxes and havresacks, and their half-pikes for firelocks.

One detached himself from the party and hastily approached the garden-gate. The tears fell rapidly from Oonagh's eyes, in spite of incessant efforts to dry them; she had not succeeded when Maurice stood before her.

“Will you grant my request, dear Oonagh?” said he. “Will you promise not to shackle yourself by vows, till two years are past? Consider me as speaking for your father, and for your own sake. I believe myself to be entirely without selfish views in urging this. If, in writing to you, I spoke more hopefully of my prospects than I was entitled to do, forgive the only flattery I ever used to you. I wished you to learn gradually how little we have to expect of fortune. It were cruel and vain to deceive you.—I beseech you to be consoled.—If you remain single, the time I request, perhaps, may enable you to value some happier man. I can no longer even wish to chain you to poverty and sorrow: every circumstance that occurs shows me that all is over; that the cause for which our wasted blood has drenched Scotland and Ireland, is ruined for ever; the ruin, the penury, the

exile, this parting—all is in vain ! I have one consolation—all has been done that depended on us ; though we failed, we have fought as loyal Catholic subjects should do. Adieu, beloved Oonagh !—may you be happier than he who leaves you ! While you are with the Queen, you cannot suffer utter destitution ; but grant my request, I entreat.”

“ Be assured, Maurice,” replied Oonagh, “ every request of yours with me has the force of a law. Certainly two years shall elapse before I take the veil ; but do not fancy that any length of time could make me content to marry another. I take Heaven to witness that I never will ! Since the hour that I felt it my duty to resign you, I have ever been resolved on a religious life. I never did love another—I never can. Should a thousand voices swear to you that I am a wife, Maurice, dear Maurice, believe them not ! I must still remain Oonagh Lynch, and the most devoted of all who will ever love you.”

“ Do not, dear Oonagh, say so ; the time is past when these words would have made me happy : I wish you to forget me, but as your

brother ; — remember at all times that I faithfully loved you.—And now, Oonagh, we must part. Oonagh, adieu !—I fear—for ever !”

She no longer wept, but, sinking on her knees, uttered a short and fervent prayer for him ; then said, “ Yes, I feel we are parting for ever ! In my eyes you are a martyr. Would to Heaven I deserved or resembled you !—that I could look back upon the past as you can, without the bitterness of self-reproach ! I am trying to be like you.”

“ Oonagh, the most fervent wish I have long entertained is, that you could resolve to be completely frank with me. What do you risk by confidence towards one who, you will not deny, has done nothing to forfeit that which you once seemed to place in him ? You have on several occasions shown a reserve for which I cannot account, on subjects which did not seem to admit of any : this is needless as regards yourself, and mortifying as it regards me. If I have not expressed this as much and as often as perhaps I was entitled to do, it has not grieved or surprised me the less. I do not wish to make this painful parting

more painful by recurring to past causes of division ; but ask yourself if, in my place, you should not have felt them like me ? Pardon me, I see I grieve you ; it is what you have just said that drew it from me."

" Nothing can make me more miserable," replied Oonagh, calmly, " than I am now. Circumstances the most unforeseen prevented me from being released from a promise of secrecy which has to me been a perpetual source of vexation and embarrassment. I have been punished in a thousand ways ; —yet, if you knew the truth, it was for no fault to you."

" I believe you," replied Maurice ; " forgive me for seeming to reproach you in the last moment we spend together."

CHAPTER XIV.

A YEAR is soon passed!—to the gay, the young, the happy, a year is soon passed—but, to the sorrowful, how many heavy days and painful nights may that year include!

The spring of 1693 covered France with its tender green, but the sadness of winter was remaining at St. Germain's. All that was generally known of the Scotch exiles was, that they were under the command of Marshal Noailles, who at that time had invested the city of Roses; that the hardships suffered by his troops were extraordinary; and in the valley of Lamparda, where Roses was situate, the climate was so unfavourable to all but the natives, the water was so scanty in supply, and so bad in quality, that when the King of Spain heard of the siege,

he remarked that no "army was required to oppose Marshal Noailles." A long and weary march across the Pyrenees had preceded this ill-omened siege, and famine was added to their other miseries; sickness followed, and many perished daily among the besiegers.

The intelligence of Captain Grant's death came to his widow, and Oonagh, in a visit she charitably paid to that forlorn family, was shown the letter announcing the event. The writer mentioned the distresses the army was enduring, and the names of some who had fallen victims to their severity. Among those who were the present sufferers from illness and fatigue, was the name of Sir Maurice Bellew, who had particularly distinguished himself by repulsing parties of the besieged when they had attempted a sortie from Roses, and whose present dangerous situation excited universal interest.

Oonagh returned to the palace full of the anticipation of evil, and deeply repented having, by rejecting Maurice, deprived herself of her right to attend him in sickness or death. She had not dwelt on this reflection many hours

without considering she might still follow him, if his situation should become desperate. If he perished, the unfavourable and contemptuous opinions such a proceeding would excite would signify little to one who would then think it “ a small thing to be judged of man’s judgment,” who could instantly shelter herself from the world behind the grate of a convent ; if he recovered, her joy and thankfulness would be too great to be diminished by the sneers of those who misjudged her.

She determined to join Sir Maurice at Roses. All the obstacles in her way appeared trifling. She collected all that remained of her trinkets, which she confided to Joyce Malone, adjuring her to obtain their value in money. Conscious that the Queen would refuse her leave to depart, according to her present plan, she would not mention it ; but, having a few days before entreated permission to visit her aunt’s convent, she merely reminded her Majesty of that request, and quitted St. Germain’s on receiving her sanction.

On arriving at Paris she received the price of her jewels, and determined to ask counsel

and assistance from M. de Rosambeau, whose character she knew was sufficiently generous to ensure his remaining a friend in spite of his disappointment as a lover. He came at her first summons, and she frankly confided her intention, and entreated his advice as to the execution.

Rosambeau slightly coloured, and then turned pale. He kept silence for a few moments, and then endeavoured to point out the difficulties and dangers of such an enterprise; adding, that he felt sure she would not suspect him of any envious thought when he besought her not to encounter risks, which Bellew himself would be the first to apprehend and deprecate.

Oonagh replied, "that she had considered the difficulty of reaching the camp at Roses, but that her hope was to remain at some town in the French territories, whither Maurice could retire till his health improved, and where she might attend and watch over him."

Rosambeau, seeing she was determined, forbore all farther remonstrance, and promised to return in the evening, after he had made enquiries which would perhaps enable him to

direct her. He punctually returned to inform her of his success:—"But," said he, "I must give you some intelligence that may change your plans; and it is so far good, that Bellew lives, and his health is so much improved that he has engaged in active service since your last account of him;—but I ought not to conceal from you, that he is now in the hands of the Spaniards."

Oonah turned pale, but spoke not; she gazed with dilated eyes at Rosambeau, and at length rested her burning head on her chilled hands.

"Another," he continued, "might try to dissuade you from your purpose, but I will serve you as you wish to be served, and consider your inclination at the hazard of your safety. Madame de Mostolez, daughter of the late Spanish Ambassador, has been detained in Paris for many months by ill health: to-morrow she sets out for Spain; I have obtained that you should be included in her passport, as an attendant. Her chaplain, a worthy priest, whom I once had an opportunity of serving, engages, when Madame de Mostolez rejoins

her family, to facilitate your journey on to Lerida, whither the French prisoners have been sent : he will also be able to ameliorate the condition of Bellew in many respects."

Oonagh fervently thanked Rosambeau, but endeavoured to repress a part of her joy in the hope of rejoining Maurice, lest she should wound the generous friend who had served her so well. He, too, tried to show a cheerfulness and alacrity in assisting her preparations, which it was scarcely possible could be perfectly natural in one aiding his mistress to rejoin his rival. Each divined what the other attempted to conceal ; as is usual to the actors in that long pantomime of life, where there is so much deception that produces no illusion !

Oonagh has seen the short fretting wave of the Bay of Biscay beat the coast by St. Jean de Luz. She has crossed the Pyrenees, and by the advice of Father Xavier, assumed the saya and mantilla ; but her dress was suited to one of humble condition, consistent with her character as attendant on Madame de Mostolez ; and the heiress of Kiltarle obtained no higher tribute to her beauty, than the occasional,

“Muy bonita, que bonita!”* of those whose careless eyes rested on her marble brow and lovely features.

The first part of her journey was performed with Father Xavier and some of the female attendants of Madame de Mostolez, in one of the coches de colleras, which formed part of the train; but this lady was going to Barcelona, and when they reached a village where the road to Lerida separates from that leading to Barcelona, Father Xavier, according to a promise made to Rosambeau, signified that he had there provided a caleza, and would accompany her to Lerida, and that Madame Mostolez was aware of the arrangement; to which Oonagh most thankfully acceded.

When she prepared to ascend the caleza with the good priest, she passed the window of the venta, where that lady and the friends who travelled in her coach were reposing. Oonagh, seeing some of the party standing at the window, bowed to Madame de Mostolez, as in thanks for her past protection; the lady bowed in return, and the repeated exclamation

* Very handsome! how handsome!

of "Bonita ! que bonita !" might have reminded Oonagh of the advantages she had now ceased to value.

She was perfectly sensible of the comfort of Father Xavier's protection and company, for Catalonia rather appeared a cheerful-looking desert, than a province of ancient and glorious Spain, only divided by the Pyrenees from the most polished kingdom in Europe. Their road occasionally skirted magnificent woods of cork trees, whose dull and arid foliage gave a "browner horror" to their silent recesses ; sometimes over large heath-tracts, where the flowers cherished by shelter in the northern countries of Europe, bloomed spontaneously and unregarded. Flos Adonis, lavender, the gay blossom of the gum cistus, even the pink flower of the wild garlick, gave the look of a garden to these thinly inhabited wilds. The green lizard glided among the myrtle-bushes, and seldom met any disturber but his foe the chameleon. Yet numerous travellers passed and met their caleza, though so few seemed to reside in this temperate and happy climate.

The rough speech, extreme vivacity, and gesticulation of the peasantry, rather intimidated Oonagh, and made her rejoice that the muleteer who guided their caleza was an Andalusian. He wore a tight brown dress ; on each elbow was a small diamond-shaped patch of scarlet cloth ; his hair, which was long enough to reach to the bottom of his waist, was in one thick plait ; and he wore a large hat, like the priests ; and sang and remonstrated with his mule instead of striking it, constantly calling it by name, and only smacking his whip in air.

It was the morning of a bright summer day, and the good priest was attentively reading, when the muleteer began the following song.

The son of the high-born lady is a Calezero now,
And bravely on his road he goes with a glad and cheerful
brow,

So gaily in his best attire, with a riband in his hair,
And ever more his joyous voice rings loudly through the air :
“ Courage ! my good and gallant horse ! on, on, our home
lies there.”

“ Bandolera ! Gallarda ! Coronella ! ”

2.

He is resting in the hall, where the happy dancers are,
And to a gay bolera tune he times his good cigar.

And sweeter too and louder, the glad musicians play,
While to that joyous music, he tunes his merry lay.

“ On, on, good horse, press forward ! we shall see our home
to-day ! ”

“ Bandolera ! Gallarda ! Coronella ! ”

3.

Though I am but a Calezero, there is one who loves me well,
A dark-hair'd girl, with sunny eyes, more bright than tongue
can tell.

And in her true and faithful heart, a crowned king I reign,
Though I am poor, and she ! the best and loveliest girl in
Spain !

On, on, brave horse ! I fain would see her face and home
again !

“ Bandolera ! Gallarda ! Coronella. ” *

* EL CALEZERO.

El higo de la Tiranna
Se a metido a Calezero
Y per el camino anda
Con muchissimo salero
Va muy remajote
Su banda en el pelo
Y asi a su Caballo
Va siempre diciendo
Bandolero, Gallarda !
Quia por via la leno brios !

Se sienta en la sala
Y asi a lo bolero
Echa un real çigarro
Y asi a lo bolero
Des pues que a fumado
Entono estos versos.
Boleros.

It was surprising to see how the mule obeyed his voice, and went swiftly on, though the harness seemed so slight and insufficient as hardly to be a restraint, had the animal proved restive. The muleteers of the country were distinguished by a red woollen cap, which fell back on the shoulder like that of the ancient Phrygians, and beneath the cap a net, the usual head-dress of Spanish peasants. In spite of the difference of dress and language, Oonagh fancied she could trace a resemblance in this distant people to her countrymen, though the "shadowy livery of the banished sun" had dyed this nation of a deeper hue than the cloudy sky of Ireland had given its natives.

As she gazed on their countenances, which from that likeness seemed familiar to her

Aunque soy Calezero
Que tengo mi dama
Y no ay gembra como ella
En toda España
No ay quien lo estorbe
Que tengo un real gembra,
Que asusta el orbe.
Bandolera ! Gallardo !
Quia por via la leno brios !

eye, she could not help comparing her former with her present situation. She doubted whether the Oonagh, brilliant in jewels, surrounded with luxuries and with flatterers, beloved by Maurice, safe under the protection of her kind father in Paris in the year 1689, was the same who now wandered, poor and disguised, to join an exile, with no other guide, friend, or acquaintance in Spain, than Father Xavier. She thought she recognised in her sorrows the punishment of her crime; and as she gazed on the pale, aged, and benevolent face of the priest, she felt a fervent wish to confess her sin to him.

Weary with the heat of the sun, he had fallen asleep, his head resting against the side of the caleza; and she had wept for some time without observation or restraint. At length he awoke; the evening was approaching rapidly, and his eye rested on Oonagh with surprise. "Why do you weep, my daughter?" said he mildly; "you have nearly attained your wish; you will reach Lerida to-morrow, and may find your friend restored to health: and however every blessing of this world and

in this world may be imperfect in itself, it is unthankful when on the eve (I hope) of obtaining what you have long and eagerly wished, to mourn as if you had suffered disappointment."

"My father," said Oonagh, "my soul is burthened with a heavy sin, which I have sworn not to divulge,—which I have never ventured to impart, even in confession. I feel now a wish to make you the depositary of my grievous secret, under the seal of confession. But oh, father! have you a pardon for one who practises unlawful science? for a sorceress, a dealer in magic?"

Father Xavier regarded her with surprise. "My daughter," he replied, "were such a science to exist, it would undoubtedly be unlawful; but it has long been recognised as a wretched illusion, by which designing men have deceived the ignorant. Can you conceive superhuman power lodged in the hands of an empiric who barter it for a piece of gold? I defy you to cite an instance of magical power displayed which has not been traced to the folly of the deceived, or the art of the deceiving.

Your misfortune arises from your credulity. When I have received your confession, I shall be enabled to prove it to you."

Oonagh confessed herself to the priest, who pointed out to her how obviously Schenk had imposed on her for his own interests. "Sir Maurice did not immediately love you, but when intimacy and retirement made him thoroughly acquainted with you, an attachment began, which the German probably foresaw would arise. From your situation relative to Sir Maurice, was it incredible that he should have penetrated your feelings at Paris, and even then seen how he might use them for his advantage? Was it not obvious that he must exact a promise of secrecy, to prevent Sir Patrick and Sir Maurice objecting to the alienation of Ardcarrick? Be comforted, my dear child; confess to Sir Maurice all that appears capricious and contradictory in your conduct. Perhaps life has yet long and happy years in store for you. Schenck attained his object, received the reward he so little merited; the grave has closed over him, and no injury can ensue to him from your frankly owning his

imposture to Sir Maurice. With regard to the incidents which attended the death of your mother, the Lady Lynch, you allow that they were repeated to you by the servants and other female attendants ; that Sir Patrick not only never related them himself, but forbade their being recounted to you : is it not probable that the love of the marvellous, the pleasure of propagating a forbidden mystery, induced those silly and ignorant women to amplify such circumstances as were true, and to add others wholly fictitious ? There was nothing very singular in the Abbé's theft being known to M. Bontemps ; he might even have been his accomplice ; the motives which influenced the German, no doubt, also caused his menace of death to Lady Lynch, in case she divulged his communication ; and even you must have heard many instances, where a prediction of death has produced its own accomplishment."

It is needless to dwell on, or repeat all the aged ecclesiastic said to Oonagh ; but the discourse of that day gave more comfort to her heart, and peace to her soul, than she had known for years. Her thoughts soon turned

to the hope of meeting Maurice under such different impressions, with the liberty to speak with entire confidence, and to entertain such hopes of sudden and unexpected turns of fortune in their favour, as, whether well or ill-founded, form some of the pleasantest moments and the most valuable privilege of youth and inexperience. Her spirits rose in proportion to their previous depression, and her heart beat to suffocation, when Father Xavier, pointing to a distant hill, said, "There stands Lérída; those are the banks of the Segra."

Oh, how more than lovely did that hill and river appear to Oonagh! how she envied the swiftness of the birds which seemed to bend their flight thither! She bent forward in the caleza, as if by so doing she could hasten the mule; and in broken Spanish adjured the calezero to make haste: who only nodded, and conversed with his mule as before, without increasing his pace; and her only consolation was to think, that whether fast or slow, she was on her way to Maurice. It was plain he had recovered his health; for she had learned, from questioning Rosambeau, that it was in

an attempt to repulse a sally the Spaniards had made from Roses that Maurice and his companions had been taken prisoners by a party of Spaniards who were coming to relieve the town, and thus cut off the retreat of the Scotch officers who had ventured too near the walls.

When Oonagh and her companion reached Lerida, the good Xavier conducted her to the inn, and went forth to gain information relative to the place where the prisoners were confined. Before his departure, he caused refreshments to be placed before her, and urged her to eat and take some rest, as he should be absent perhaps some hours. Oonagh tried to obey, but anxious joy had prevented her feeling either appetite or fatigue.

When three hours had elapsed, the father returned, and announced his success. He had found the prisoners, had seen the governor, whom he knew, and who had kindly permitted Oonagh to visit the prison daily, and sent an order which she was to show at the gate: nay, he had seen Sir Maurice Bellew and his com-

panions walking on a part of the ramparts which had been allotted for their exercise, and all appeared in perfect health.

Oonagh wept for joy, and entreated Xavier to conduct her directly to her lover. He assented, but said, "I must then leave you. I have arranged with the mistress of a respectable house, near the prison, for your lodging; and that a trusty person shall every day conduct you to Sir Maurice, and return with you. I may not even wait for your return to-night; but before I go," said he, "let me execute the commission of Count Rosambeau. The purse you gave me to pay your journey is untouched. The Count, who is fervently attached to Sir Maurice, told me he feared to diminish the resources his friend might find it very difficult to renew in Spain; he therefore furnished me with money, and your's is still in this purse."

Oonagh regretted to receive this assistance from Rosambeau, but could not resolve to mortify so kind a friend by refusing it, as Maurice might really have need of more than it was in her power to furnish. She thanked

Father Xavier fervently for all his services, and promised to write to him, when she knew how fortune would dispose of her and her lover.

At the door of the prison he quitted her, to rejoin Madame de Mostolez at Barcelona; and she followed her conductor, one of the guards of the prisoners, through some long stone passages, at the end of which he unbarred a door, and having admitted her, retired, and locked it.

The prisoner was wistfully contemplating through his narrow window the carriage of a gun, the only visible object without, and which considerably diminished the light within. He slowly turned at the noise of the opening door in time to catch Oonagh, who threw herself into his arms; for the proud and the timid, when under the influence of feelings strong enough to overcome their habitual reserve, are more vehement and frank in the expression of their feelings than characters more habitually demonstrative.

The prisoner held her for some moments, as if struck with surprise, and speechless from

joy. Oonagh turned her eyes to his countenance, to see how far she might trust to the report of his recovered health, and with a faint shriek disengaged herself from his arms; for it was not Maurice Bellew, but an utter stranger, who was gazing in amazement at her conduct, and admiration of her beauty!

When she first entered, he had (though surprised at her emotion) formed suspicions much to her disadvantage, and with a vanity pardonable under the circumstances, concluded he was the object of her visit; but her modest and distinguished air soon convinced him that he wronged her, and in spite of her jet-black hair, and the saya and mantilla in which she was dressed, he instantly saw she was a compatriot. For in Spain, as in France, it is impossible to mistake an Englishwoman for a native of either of those countries; her grace and expression are of a different description.

“I am sadly mistaken; I ask pardon for my intrusion,” said she, blushing deeply; “I was told this was the prison of Sir Maurice Bellew, a friend—a relation—Will you, sir,

be kind enough to tell me how I may reach his apartment? A friend of mine assured me he was here."

"They were deceived, perhaps, by a name which to foreign ears might sound nearly similar. My name is Malise Beatoun, and I was a captain in Lord Dundee's regiment; but I grieve to tell you Sir Maurice is not at Lerida."

"Not at Lerida!" said Oonagh; "where, oh where is he?" Her limbs trembled, and she was forced to lean against the wall for support.

"Sir Maurice," resumed Captain Beatoun, "was marched, with the rest of our unlucky party, from the neighbourhood of Roses; but he and two more, having suffered much from fatigue and famine, were in very bad health, and were sent to the hospital at Vilada, where I believe they still remain."

Oonagh was so utterly stupified by the chillness of disappointment and alarm, that she made no reply; and it was many minutes ere she recollected all the circumstances which enhanced the embarrassment of her desolate

situation. She had a very imperfect knowledge of the Spanish language, and even that was rendered less useful from having learned the Castilian Spanish, which was scarcely intelligible to those who only understood the animated patois of Catalonia.* Father Xavier had been her interpreter, even with her landlady and the Gallego servant who had guided her to the prison, from whence she did not expect him to lead her until sunset: she had the disagreeable expectation of spending those hours with Captain Beatoun. The irksomeness of this situation lent her courage: she besought her involuntary companion and host to try to summon some one that might directly release her; and had the vexation of hearing that he was under arrest for having quarrelled with one of the guards who had treated him with disrespect, considering him as a common

* This dialect has a great affinity with the ancient language of *o* or *oc*, which still forms the basis of the southern patois of France, from whence is derived the name of *Languedoc*, formerly that of a province. The designation of *Languedoc* is as ancient as the 13th century. Under Charles VII. the half of France was so called. To the other provinces belonged the language of *oil* or *oui*.

soldier. There was no likelihood of any person coming to her assistance—no use in impatience and repining !

After a long and awkward silence, she resolved to make use of this short captivity to facilitate her journey to Vilada. She entreated Beatoun to assist her in framing a petition to the governor ; and drawing forth her tablets, inscribed her request, which he translated into Spanish :—and her resignation was rewarded by hearing a footstep approach their door. It was the guard who had admitted her, and who, supposing she was either the wife or mistress of the prisoner, thought an act of such courtesy offered a fair occasion for extorting a present from the obliged, and had come to claim it. Beatoun explained the mistake ; and, for a piece of money, Oonagh was led to the door of the governor's house. The same powerful agent interested his servant in her favour ; and when his master was preparing to mount his horse, the petition was presented.

She had represented herself as the travelling attendant of Madame de Mostolez, and men-

tioned that Bellew was a near relation, whom she was anxious to rejoin at Vilada. The governor might, perhaps, have read her entreaty with little regard, but, having accidentally cast his eyes on Oonagh, he was struck with the uncommon beauty of the petitioner. His countenance changed: taking off his hat, he addressed her with great politeness; and when he discovered, by her reply, that she could not converse fluently in Spanish, he begged, in French, that she would explain what service he could offer. He then gave orders, with the most obliging solicitude, for her passport to Vilada, though not without various intimations that her stay at Lerida was very much desired. He could not guess that the lonely and plainly-dressed female before him was the heiress of Kiltarle—the daughter of the ambitious and unfortunate Sir Patrick Lynch.

CHAPTER XV.

OONAGH'S anxiety increased by disappointment. She could hardly believe that she *could* meet Maurice—so many difficulties had hitherto delayed that happiness! and her feelings had undergone many other mutations relative to the measure of rejoining him. When she represented him ill and dying, she mourned over every moment of delay that withheld her from attending him. At other times, when she fancied him restored to health, engaged by the general interests, and distinguishing himself in the fulfilment of his professional duty, she shrank from the construction which the world, and even her lover, might place on her conduct in following him, and almost wished the earth to close over her, before they

met ;—a word of coldness,—a look of reproving surprise, would send her from his presence aghast and humbled, to repent her rash devotion.

She approached Vilada with inexpressible agitation. At Lerida, the presence of the good Xavier had encouraged and supported her ; she bitterly regretted that she no longer retained such a companion : but, when the prison of Vilada was in sight, all other sensations were lost in the alternate flush and chill of apprehension. She found it, and learned that some of the prisoners had obtained leave to work for a cork-cutter, and one, who was ill, was alone in the common room.

Oonagh is there—and the inhabitant was Maurice ! Had not his passionate reception and joy at seeing her convinced her it *was* Maurice, she might yet have doubted ; for he was greatly changed. His hair had lost its rich, waving strength and jetty darkness : it was thin, straight, and retreating from his forehead. His clear complexion was tanned to the deepest shade of olive ; his features

were sharp ; his countenance anxious and aged beyond her utmost fear ; a spot of deep red, towards evening, fixed on each cheek ; his hand burnt ; and his step was heavy and slow.

“ Oh, Maurice ! dear Maurice ! ” she exclaimed, “ how much you have suffered ! It is written on your face ; I fear you are very ill ! ”

“ No,” said he, “ dear Oonagh : since I have seen you, I feel quite well :—but you will allow, that hard work in the trenches before Roses, assisted by a diet of horse-beans and oil, was not likely to fatten ;—a scorching sun, too, in the valley of Lamparda, does not bleach and improve the complexion.”

How thankful was Oonagh to Rosambeau for having afforded a means to save her purse ! She now procured a bed, and a diet more advantageous to Maurice’s health. She found for herself a very small room near the prison ; and she spent the day with Maurice—that day too short for the happiness of seeing and hearing him !

He attempted to reprove the rashness of her journey—to regret that she had come ; but

his reproaches ended in passionate thanks for so unequivocal a proof of devotion ; adding, “ I did not even hope that my fate was so much to you now.”

“ Oh, Maurice !” said Oonagh, “ what makes my present happiness so far beyond the past is, that I need not hide one thought from you !—you may forgive all my seeming caprice ! That ever-blessed Father Xavier has proved to me, that I have been a wretched dupe to Herman Schenk,—that I may now confess it to you ! I have much to confess !” continued she, blushing deeply at the recollection that she had loved him unsought ; “ but you will forgive a fault which proceeded from an earnest wish to please you. I had reckoned too much on my dear father’s expectation that you would love me. I was grieved—miserable, to see your indifference. Schenk had guessed my heart, and offered a spell with which to win yours, if I would pay him with the lands of Ardcarrick, and promise secrecy. I agreed ; and my belief in his power was confirmed by my success. You, who appeared so cold at

Paris—even occupied by another—loved me at Kiltarle—loved me, as I had loved you !”

“ Oh heaven ! Oonagh,” exclaimed Maurice, “ is this possible ?—could you suppose that any spell but your own perfection was needed ? It is true that I had loved Hortensia ; but, even at Paris, that feeling had long ceased. Strange circumstances, which I need not detail to you, had long proved her to be unworthy of affection. I saw her conduct with surprise and curiosity : the habit of observing her remained, but even then I loved her not. Was it not natural that, when our days were spent constantly together at Kiltarle, I should instantly and passionately love you ?”

“ But I have still to account for the apparent caprice,” said Oonagh, interrupting him, “ which made me refuse to become your wife, when at St. Germain’s you urged our immediate marriage. Oh, Maurice ! even when my poor father joined our hands, and named the day and hour when Father Moriarty should unite us for ever, even then I felt that the blessings purchased by crime are hollow mockery—like

the fruits which tempt the traveller by the once burning lake, yet offer him but the dust of the desert to slake his thirst ! Your hand, your heart, it is true, seemed mine, but a gulf was between us. While you spoke every thought of your noble heart, I knew I was an impostor, who never might return your confidence, who heard all, and ungenerously forbore to grant my own. The absence of all reserve, which would have been such perfect happiness to one who deserved you, was forbidden to me ! the thought I might not tell was ever present to memory, and oppressed me with self-accusation. Your love too—what was it?—spell, illusion, intoxication!—the wild dream of inebriety, the stupor from an opiate ! which might fly as lightly as it came before healthy wakefulness, and leave me as wretched—a thousand times more so than if you had never loved ! Every expression of affection from you pierced my heart by the reflection that I was not the love of youth, the chosen from the world ; you addressed an imaginary object, were won by a stratagem, de-

ceived by a masquer, the victim of sorcery ! Oh, Maurice ! dear Maurice ! how many sleepless nights have I spent in weeping !”

“ Instead of reproaching yourself, dearest Oonagh, listen to my grateful thanks for having thought me worth so much anxiety. I cannot grieve as I ought for the sorrow I caused, when it proves how much you have loved me. But why——”

“ Let me say all,” cried Oonagh : “ the horrible event which occurred on the day that was to have made me your wife—our separation, seemed to me the particular interposition of a punishment, as if my crime could not prosper or win its object ; and if in spite of the sorrow and suspense which followed, this impression was weakened, it returned in full force when we were again separated by the ill-fated expedition to Ireland. All that followed convinced me, that, without sharing my guilt, you would incur my punishment, if I did not dis-sever our destinies ; and I resolved to make this great sacrifice—You know all !”

“ Oh, Oonagh !” cried Maurice, “ would I had known it sooner ! How unjustly I have

judged you ! how readily I must have seemed to resign you ! Forgive it, and believe that my whole life, that every hour that remains of it, will prove my gratitude and passionate affection."

Long and happy hours of confidence, of protested love, of sad and of gay recollections, of impossible plans, anticipated difficulties, and chastised hopes, followed Oonagh's confession.

It may be imagined she abjured her intention of taking the veil ; and again they discussed a thousand plans for obtaining a humble competence in France or Spain, in a meaner rank than that which they were born to fill—a thousand plans to recover Maurice's liberty directly. Petitions to King James, to the King of France, letters to Marechal de Noailles, were meditated, and half composed, ere they separated ; and Oonagh bore to her small and solitary room matter for happy musings on the future, to which she had so long been a stranger.

The succeeding week made a great improvement in Maurice's health and spirits : peaceful rest, the rich fruits of Spain, and suitable

clothing, which Oonagh procured for him—her care and watchfulness—all contributed to this happy change; but afterwards his recovery did not seem to advance so rapidly.—Some other Scotch and Irishmen were resident at Vilada since the Revolution: among the rest, one named Peter O'Hara often visited the governor of the prison, to whom he had lately rendered a service. This man's family were tenants of Lord Rostellan; he therefore knew Bellew's family, and took sufficient interest in his welfare to guarantee his security were he suffered to leave the prison,—a privilege of which he was glad to avail himself, and Oonagh still more so, as he hoped that measure was alone wanting to complete his cure. O'Hara's real employment was to carry on an illicit trade by conveying Spanish wines (particularly that of Sitges) into the French territory, which, in spite of the war, he frequently effected, to his great profit. In an expedition on which he was now to go, he had agreed to convey the letters and petitions which Maurice had prepared in hopes to further his enlargement.

Meanwhile he had removed with Oonagh

into a mean, but clean apartment, where they lived with strict economy, knowing how rapidly the small sum they possessed would diminish, and the great difficulty they would find, as indigent strangers, in obtaining assistance from other sources. Their marriage was agreed upon ; as, after Oonagh's journey to Spain, so unequivocal a proof of attachment to Bellew would render it necessary to prevent all reflections on her relinquishing the Queen's protection.

On a lovely evening, when the clear summer moonbeams forced their way through the wooden lattice of their small room, which had been closed all day to exclude the scorching air, Oonagh proposed to Bellew to walk to the Alameda, which was not very distant ; he had seemed so oppressed by the heat the whole of the day, and she hoped the air might refresh him. He complied : but on reaching the Alameda, complained of fatigue, and sat down. Oonagh sat by him, talking often and cheerfully ; but he rarely spoke, and faintly smiled, and soon proposed their return home. When there, she placed some fruit, rusks, and cho-

colate before him, observing, he would feel better when he had supped. He accepted what she gave, but scarcely tasted it, and soon bade her good night, complaining of fatigue. Oonagh remained long after he was gone, endeavouring to discover some means of diminishing the heat, to which she attributed his increased indisposition, and anticipating with anxious pleasure the mild autumn she hoped to see in France, on which she depended for the entire restoration of his health.

In the morning he came not to join her till late, and appeared yet more languid than when they had parted ; he declined food, but eagerly drank large draughts of *agras* ;*—and the succeeding day she vainly tried to think that in some respects he was better. Finding the walk to the Alameda had seemed too much for his strength, when evening brought the sudden darkness which follows sunset in a hot climate, she proposed they should repair to a garden on the flat roof of the house they lived in, (as is common in Spain.) They had sometimes

* An acid liquor made of unripe grapes, and very much resembling lemonade.

walked there before. Oonagh was amusing herself by changing the position of some of the small flower-pots, and raised one from the ground, but immediately set it down, saying it was too heavy. Maurice rose to assist her, and laid his hands on the flower-pot—but moved it not, though he again essayed to do so. He was silent some moments, and slightly coloured, but sat down without speaking. Oonagh observing this, made no observation; she guessed this evidence of his feebleness might be discouraging, and hoped he would not dwell on it.

They descended to their own little apartment, and Maurice sat thoughtfully on the sofa, with eyes fixed on the mat which covered their brick-floor. Oonagh herself could no longer shut her eyes to the conviction that his illness was increasing; and painfully revolved how, without seeming to feel new alarm, she should engage him to receive the visits of a physician. She was aroused from her reverie by his voice.

“Oonagh,” said he, “I have been considering which is the most easily borne, an affliction

long foreseen, or the crush of an unexpected misfortune—what is your opinion?”

He spoke low and slowly; but to her these words appeared to issue through loud trumpets from the united and exalted voice of all mankind, for with female quickness she guessed the drift of his question. She felt what her answer should be, and replied with a calm, firm voice,

“Undoubtedly the sorrow we have long prepared to meet, must be a lighter evil than one of which we had no expectation.”

“I am glad to hear you say so. For some days I have felt an impression I should wish to confide, but the fear of alarming and grieving you, while it may yet be deferred, has made me refrain. Beloved Oonagh, on this earth we must not look beyond the present; I am called hence, and the years we hoped to spend together, are a blank for me. Oonagh, I am dying! the joy of seeing you, the sudden change fortune seemed to work in my favour when you were restored to me, seemed to bring back hope and health; the power seemed to be given with the added wish to struggle with

my fate ; but for some days I have felt that all is in vain !”

Oonagh sank on her knees by his side, and bathed his hand with bitter tears, exclaiming, “ Do not say—do not think so; you have been without physicians, without care, without me ; you must see——”

“ No, Oonagh, do not deceive yourself—I will see a physician if you choose ; I am willing to make every effort to live ; but it may not be. While I cherished the hope of recovery, (and that hope remained long after reason should have quelled it,) I forbore to sadden you with gloomy auguries which might never be fulfilled ; but to hide such presages now were needless. This long struggle, these vain efforts are about to close ! This world of toil and frustration will in a few days cease to be that which I inhabit—no place in it remains for me ! For our baffled warfare and ruined cause, I am consoled ; my heart is warmed by the recollection that we have done *all* we could. We have resisted our destiny manfully, like good soldiers and faithful subjects. The hardest sacrifice is to leave you.—I hope,

Oonagh, that long years will be given you with a happier man ; that you will return to France, and remain with the Queen till that takes place——”

“ I have heard you, dear Maurice,” she replied, “ but I can bear no more. Speak not to me of what cannot happen ; let us seek assistance ;” and she fled to the landlord of the house to enquire who was the most approved physician of Vilada.

They sent for him, but received from him merely those oracular and ambiguous replies which only deceive those who wish to be deceived. Every day proved Maurice more visibly declining ; ere a few more had passed, he was unable to leave his couch, except for two or three hours.

Oonagh spent the long nights sitting by that hopeless bed afraid to move, her eyes fixed on the wall, where she watched the shadow of his profile ; its vibration enabled her to guess the changes of his pulse and breathing. She heard no voice express sympathy or consolation ; the mechanical compliment of the physician,

the formal enquiry occasionally made by her landlord, were the only human sounds that reached her ear. The sound of the clock would have been as the voice of a friend, had not each hour as it struck seemed to say she had one the less to spend with Maurice.

Very sad was her recollection of her past folly ! The money she had squandered on Schenk would have given them wealth, would have saved Maurice from joining the troops at Perpignan, and from losing health and life by the hardships endured at the siege of Roses. But for her refusal to marry him at St. Germain's, she might have been his wife for the last two years in spite of their adverse fortune ! She dared not lament her calamities ; they were her own creation.

At length replies reached them to those letters O'Hara had conveyed to France. At the request of King James, Maurice was to be included in an exchange of prisoners then to take place ; and a small sum of money still remaining from the price of her jewels was forwarded to Oonagh, and a gleam of hope visited her heart. She thought a return to France

might still benefit Maurice, and began to entertain an idea that by easy journeys he might still perhaps be conveyed thither.

She read him the letters, and he showed some joy at learning she had received the money. He pressed her hand, saying, "It will take you to France :"—he took no interest in the news of the exchange of prisoners.

“ For when the fading eye grows dim,
And fails each faint and wasted limb,
And short and frequent pantings show
The dire disease that lurks below,
Will Mirth allay, can Pleasure calm
The hurried pulse, the burning palm ?
Go, bid the festal board be crown'd,
Let the soft voice of Music sound,
And Art, and Wit, and Learning spread
Their treasures round the sick man's bed ;
With deafen'd ear, with heedless eye,
The silent sufferer turns to die.”

Oonagh saw it was too late ! Three days afterwards Maurice received the last rites of the Romish Church, and bade her adieu with firmness and piety !

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That grey stone pile is the convent of “ Our Lady of Sorrows.” The rule is very strict. It is surrounded by rich vineyards, but their gay and plenteous aspect is not seen by the sad inhabitants. High walls shroud the enclosure. For fifteen years, in each of the services from Matins to the Completas, one clear voice was heard above the rest: it was sad and sweet, and seemed to tell of pardon and of peace. It was heard with delight, and spoken of with admiration by all who visited the Church; and was said to belong to an English nun, though the accents of that land were never more heard or spoken by her. That voice ceased, and with it the sorrows of Oonagh Lynch !

* * * * *

Man, man, man ! you scorn the fool, no doubt, who sacrificed all to a wretched delusion,—who had no higher aim in life than to find favour in the caprice of another being, as frail, limited, and transitory, as herself. You are right: you have nobler objects; you are

a legislator, ambitious, powerful, eloquent. Your voice sways thousands, who listen with respect ; your words are quoted ; you are upholding the glorious institutions of a free country, or reproofing its abuses ; your opponents quail at your sonorous voice, your extended and menacing arm !—It drops powerless at the chill touch of palsy, or a few drops of blood linger in their course through your overwrought brain ;—your friends sigh, but find a successor. Your place is filled up—

“ The table’s full ! ”

though you are no longer a guest. Your arguments, your opinions, are no longer applicable to circumstances which could not be foreseen. Your enemies appropriate your observations, even your witticisms. You are remembered only to be blamed ; “ the hour is theirs,” for you cannot be heard in reply.

Were you not the slave of a monstrous delusion ?

But your objects are more important than fame or ambition. You amass the wealth you toiled to obtain—“ yellow, precious, glittering gold.” You buy a place among the nobles—

their halls for your sons, their hearts for your daughters. The ships of every flag bear a part of your riches. The funds of every nation own a share of your hoard. Kings court and borrow from you; yet you seek more! in spite of the woe denounced against “those who add house to house, and field to field, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.”—One mistaken speculation, — your gold, and your diamonds, vanish as the frost-work or gossamer before the sunbeam of an autumnal day!

Were not you also the dupe of a wretched delusion?

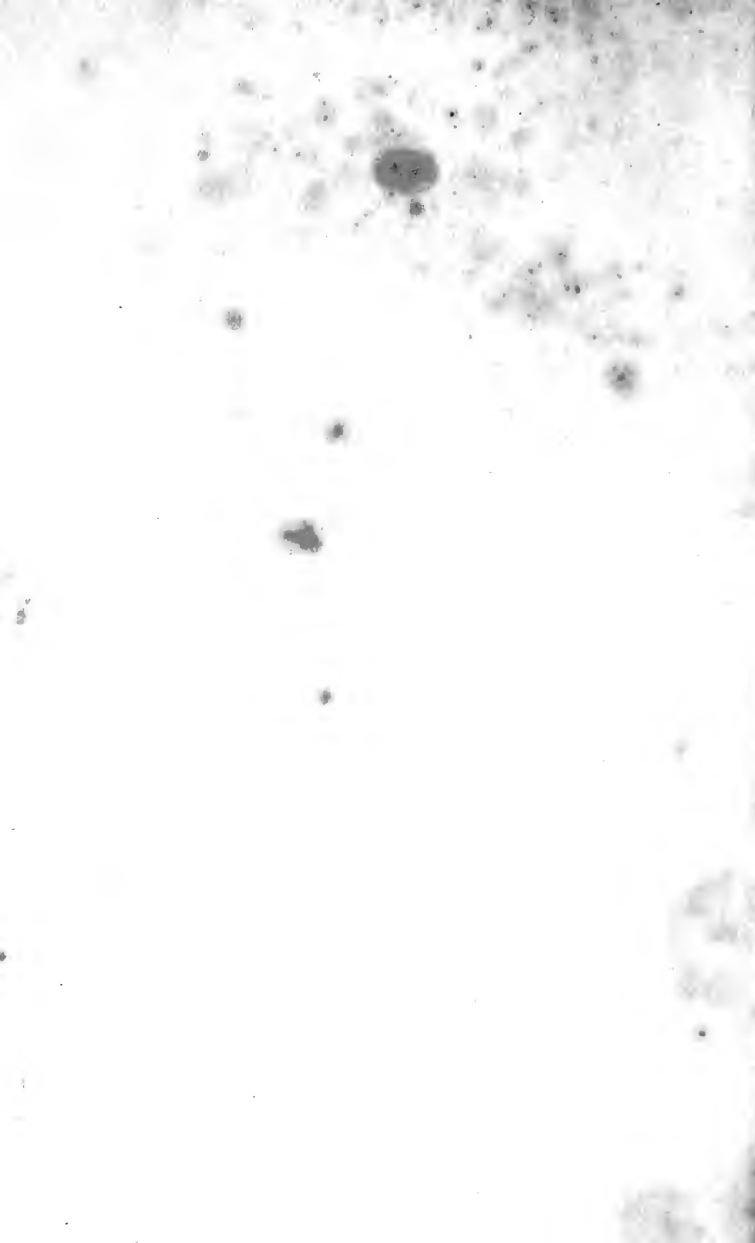
Then deride not the woe and the folly of Oonagh Lynch.

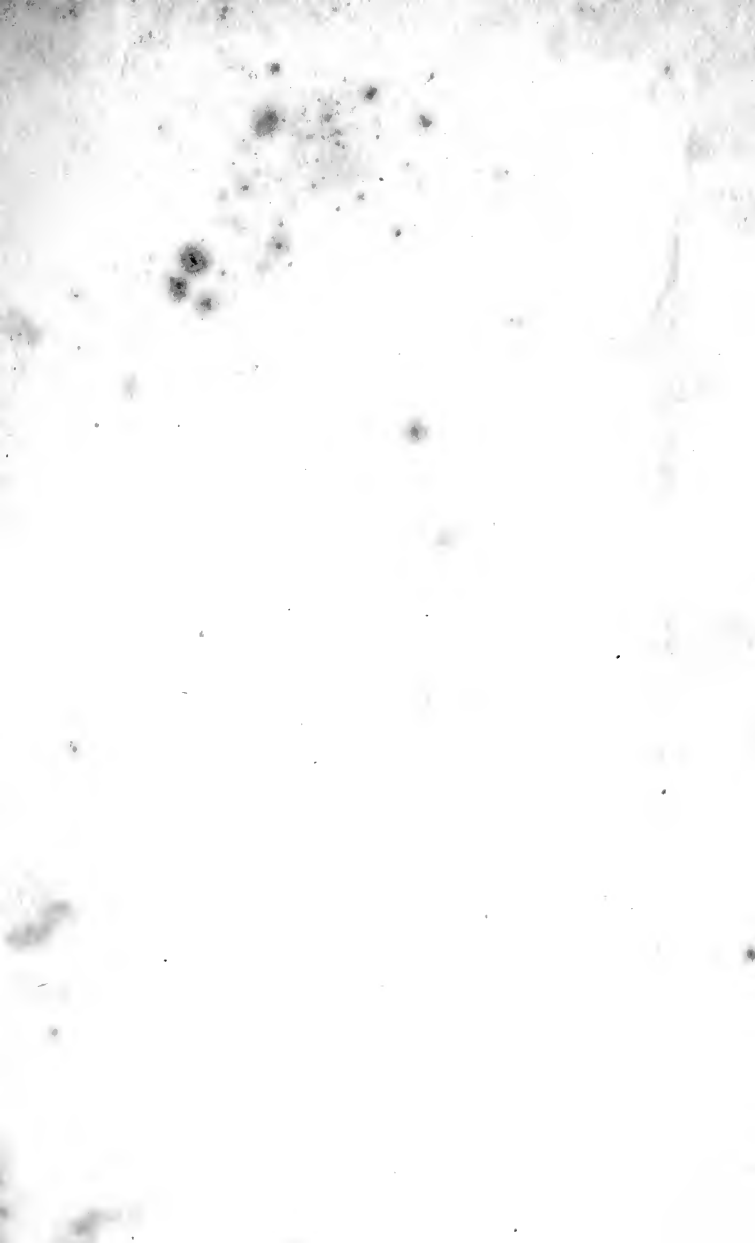
THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.









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